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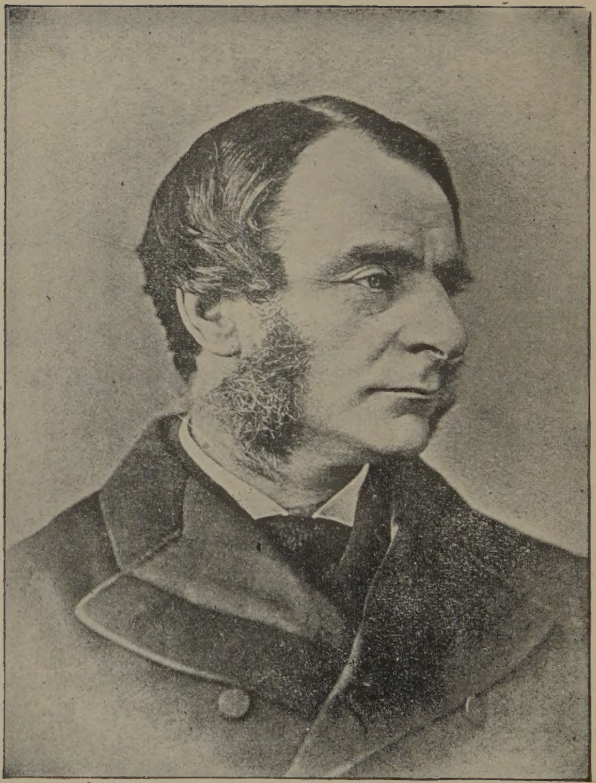

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HYPATIA.

HYPATIA.

IN the upper story of a house in the Museum street of Alexandria, built and fitted up on the old Athenian model, was a small room. It had been chosen by its occupant, not merely on account of its quiet; for though it was tolerably out of hearing of the female slaves who worked, and chattered, and quarreled under the cloisters of the women's court on the south side, yet it was exposed to the rattle of the carriages and the voices of passengers in the fashionable street below, and to strange bursts of roaring, squealing, and trumpeting from the menagerie, a short way off on the opposite side of the street. The attraction of the situation lay, perhaps, in the view which it commanded over the wall of the museum gardens, of flower-beds, shrubberies, fountains, statues, walks, and alcoves, which had echoed for nearly seven hundred years to the wisdom of the Alexandrian sages and poets. School after school, they had all walked, and taught, and sung there, beneath the spreading planes and chestnuts, figs and palm-trees. The place seemed fragrant with all the riches

of Greek thought and song, since the days when Ptolemy Philadelphus walked here with Euclid and Theocritus, Callimachus and Lycophron.

On the left of the garden stretched the lofty eastern front of the museum itself, with its picture galleries, halls of statuary, dining-halls, and lecture-rooms; one huge wing containing that famous library, founded by the father of Philadelphus, which held in the time of Seneca, even after the destruction of a great part of it in Cæsar's siege, four hundred thousand manuscripts. There it towered up, the wonder of the world, its white roof bright against the rainless blue; and beyond it, among the ridges and pediments of noble buildings, a broad glimpse of the bright blue sea.

The room was fitted up in the purest Greek style, not without an affectation of archaism, in the severe forms and subdued half-tints of the frescoes which ornamented the walls with scenes from the old myths of Athene. Yet the general effect, even under the blazing sun which poured in through the mosquito-nets of the court-yard windows, was one of exquisite coolness, and cleanliness, and repose. The room had neither carpet nor fire-place; and the only movables in it were a sofa-bed, a table, and an arm-chair, all of such delicate and graceful forms, as may be seen on ancient vases of far earlier period than that whereof we write. But, most probably, had any of

us entered that room that morning, we should not have been able to spare a look either for the furniture, or the general effect, or the museum gardens, or the sparkling Mediterranean beyond; but we should have agreed that the room was quite rich enough for human eyes, for the sake of one treasure which it possessed, and, beside which, nothing was worth a moment's glance. For in the light arm-chair, reading a manuscript which lay on the table, sat a woman, of some five-and-twenty years, evidently the tutelary goddess of that little shrine, dressed, in perfect keeping with the archaism of the chamber, in a simple old snow-white Ionic robe, falling to the feet and reaching to the throat, and of that peculiar and graceful fashion in which the upper part of the dress falls downward again from the neck to the waist in a sort of a cape, entirely hiding the outline of the bust, while it leaves the arms and the point of the shoulders bare. Her dress was entirely without ornament, except the two narrow purple stripes down the front, which marked her rank as a Roman citizen, the gold-embroidered shoes upon her feet, and the gold net, which looped back, from her forehead to her neck, hair, the color and gloss of which were were hardly distinguishable from that of the metal itself, such as Athene herself might have envied for tint, and mass, and ripple. Her features, arms, and hands were of the severest and grandest type of old

Greek beauty, at once showing everywhere the high development of the bones, and covering them with that firm, round, ripe outline, and waxy morbidezza of skin, which the old Greeks owed to their continual use not only of the bath and muscular exercise, but also of daily unguents. There might have seemed to us much sadness in that clear gray eye; too much self-conscious restraint in those sharp curved lips; too much affectation in the studied severity of her posture as she read, copied, as it seemed, from some old vase or bas-relief. But the glorious grace and beauty of every line of face and figure would have excused, even hidden those defects, and we should have only recognized the marked resemblance to the ideal portraits of Athene which adorned every panel of the walls.

She has lifted her eyes off her manuscript; she is looking out with kindling countenance over the gardens of the museum; her ripe curling Greek lips, such as we never see now, even among our own wives and sisters, open. She is talking to herself. Listen:

"Yes. The statues there are broken. The libraries are plundered. The alcoves are silent. The oracles are dumb. And yet—who says that the old faith of heroes and sages is dead? The beautiful can never die. If the gods have deserted their oracles, they have not deserted the souls who aspire to

them. If they have ceased to speak to their own elect; if they have cast off the vulgar herd; they have not cast off Hypatia.

. . . . . .

"Ay. To believe in the old creeds, while every one else is dropping away from them. . . . To believe in spite of disappointments. . . . To hope against hope. . . . To show one's self superior to the herd, by seeing boundless depths of living glory in myths which have become dark and dead to them. . . . To struggle to the last against the new and vulgar superstitions of a rotting age, for the faith of my forefathers, for the old gods, the old heroes, the old sages who gauged the mysteries of heaven and earth—and perhaps to conquer—at last to have my reward! To be welcomed into celestial ranks of the heroic—to rise to the immortal gods, to the ineffable powers, onward, upward, ever, through ages and through eternities, till I find my home at last, and vanish in the glory of the nameless and Absolute One!"

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

As Hypatia went forth the next morning, in all her glory, with a crowd of philosophers and philosophasters, students, and fine gentlemen, following her in reverent admiration across the street to her lecture-

room, a ragged beggar-man, accompanied by a huge and villainous looking dog, planted himself right before her, and extending a dirty hand, whined for an alms.

Hypatia, whose refined taste could never endure the sight, much less the contact, of anything squalid and degraded, recoiled a little, and bade the attendant slave get rid of the man with a coin. Some of the younger gentlemen, however, considered themselves adepts in that noble art of "upsetting," then in vogue in the African universities, to which we all have reason enough to be thankful, seeing that it drove St. Augustine from Carthage to Rome; and they, in compliance with the usual fashion of tormenting any simple creature who came in their way by mystification and insult, commenced a series of personal witticisms, which the beggar bore stoically enough. The coin was offered him, but he blandly put aside the hand of the giver, and keeping his place on the payment, seemed inclined to dispute Hypatia's further passage.

"What do you want? Send the wretch and his frightful dog away, gentlemen!" said the poor philosopher, in some trepidation.

"I know that dog," said one of them; "it is Aben-Ezra's. Where did you find it before it was lost, you rascal?"

"Where your mother found you when she palmed

you off upon her goodman, my child—in the slave-market. Fair Sibyl, have you already forgotten your humblest pupil, as these young dogs have, who are already trying to upset their master and instructor in the angelic science of bullying?"

And the beggar, lifting his broad straw hat, disclosed the features of Raphael Aben-Ezra. Hypatia recoiled with a shriek of surprise.

"Ah! you are astonished. At what, I pray?"

"To see you, sir, thus!"

"Why, then? You have been preaching to us all a long time the glory of abstraction from the allurement of sense. It augurs ill, surely, for your estimate either of your pupils or of your own eloquence, if you are so struck with consternation because one of them has actually at last obeyed you."

"What is the meaning of this masquerade, most excellent sir?" asked Hypatia and a dozen voices beside.

"I am on my way to Italy, in the character of the New Diogenes, to look like him, for a man. When I have found one, I shall feel great pleasure in returning to acquaint you with the amazing news. Farewell! I wish to look once more at a certain countenance, though I have turned, as you see, Cynic; and intend henceforth to attend no teacher but my dog, who will luckily charge no fees for instruction; if she did, I must go untaught, for my

ancestral wealth made itself wings yesterday morning. . . . . .

"Farewell, Queen of Philosophy! When I find the man, you shall hear of it."

Hypatia went on to the museum, utterly bewildered by this strange meeting, and its still stranger end. She took care, nevertheless, to betray no sign of her deep interest till she found herself alone in her little waiting-room adjoining the lecture-hall; and there, throwing herself into a chair, she sat and thought, till she found, to her surprise and anger, the tears trickling down her cheeks. Not that her bosom held one spark of affection for Raphael. If there had ever been any danger of that, the wily Jew had himself taken care to ward it off, by the sneering and frivolous tone with which he quashed every approach to deep feeling, either in himself or in others. As for his compliments to her beauty, she was far too much accustomed to such to be either pleased or displeased by them. But she felt, as she said, that she had lost perhaps her only true pupil; and more —perhaps her only true master. For she saw clearly enough, that under that Silenus' mask was hidden a nature capable of—perhaps more than she dared think of. She had always felt him her superior in practical cunning; and that morning had proved to her what she had long suspected, that he was possibly also her superior in that moral earnestness and

strength of will for which she looked in vain among the enervated Greeks who surrounded her. . . .

More than once some paradox or question of his had shaken her neatest systems into a thousand cracks, and opened up ugly depths of doubt, even on the most seemingly palpable certainties; or some half-jesting allusion to those Hebrew Scriptures, the quantity and quality of his faith in which he would never confess, made her indignant at the notion that he considered himself in possession of a reserve ground of knowledge, deeper and surer than her own, in which he did not deign to allow her to share.

And yet she was irresistibly attracted to him. That deliberate and consistent luxury of his, from which she shrank, he had always boasted that he was able to put on and take off at will like a garment; and now he seemed to have proved his words; to be a worthy rival of the great Stoics of old time. Could Zeno himself have asked more from frail humanity? . . . . .

To have converted him at last to a philosophic faith in the old gods! To have made him her instrument for turning back the stream of human error! . . . How often had that dream crossed her! And now, who would take his place? . . .

Without her, she well knew, philosophy must die in Alexandria. And was it her wisdom—or other

and more earthly charms of hers—which enabled her to keep it alive? Sickening thought! Oh, that she were ugly, only to test the power of her doctrines. . . . What she wanted was men who could act while she thought. And those were just the men whom she would find nowhere, but—she knew it too well—in the hated Christian priesthood.

. . . . . .

She dashed away the tears, and proudly entered the lecture hall, and ascended the tribune like a goddess, amid the shouts of her audience. . . . What did she care for them? Would they do what she told them? She was half through her lecture before she could recollect herself, and banish from her mind the thought of Raphael.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

As Hypatia was trying to arrange her thoughts for the farewell lecture, her favorite maid announced that a messenger from Synesius waited below. A letter from Synesius? A gleam of hope flashed across her mind. From him, surely, might come something of comfort, of advice. Ah! if he only knew how sorely she was bestead!

"Let him send up his letter."

"He refuses to deliver it to any one but yourself. And I think"—added the damsel, who had, to tell the truth, at that moment in her purse a substantial

reason for so thinking—"I think it might be worth your ladyship's while to see him."

Hypatia shook her head impatiently.

"He seems to know you well, madam, though he refuses to tell his name.

"Tell him to leave the letter, and begone. My father? What? Who is this? Whom are you bringing to me at such a moment?"

And as she spoke, Theon ushered into the chamber no other than Raphael Aben-Ezra, and then retired.

. . . . . .

Raphael lingered, yet without withdrawing his gaze, as if he had something of importance to say, which he longed and yet feared to utter. At last—

"At least, you will confess that I am better dressed than when we met last. I have returned, you see, like a certain demoniac of Gadara, about whom we used to argue, clothed—and perhaps also in my right mind. . . . God knows!"

"Raphael! are you come here to mock me! Have you no speech for me but your old sarcasms and ambiguities?"

"Raphael stood silent and motionless.

"Why do you not speak? What is the meaning of this sad, earnest look, so different from your former self? . . . You have something strange to tell me!"

"I have," said he, speaking very slowly. "What

—what would Hypatia answer if, after all, Aben-Ezra said, like the dying Julian, 'The Galilean has conquered?'"

"Julian never said it! It is a monkish calumny."

"But I say it."

"Impossible!"

"I say it!"

"As your dying speech? The true Raphael Aben-Ezra, then, lives no more!"

"But he may be born again."

"And die to philosophy, that he may be born again into barbaric superstition? Oh, worthy metempsychosis! Farewell, sir!" And she rose to go.

"Hear me! hear me patiently this once, noble, beloved Hypatia! One more sneer of yours, and I may become again the same case-hardened fiend which you knew me of old—to all, at least, but you. Oh, do not think me ungrateful, forgetful! What do I owe to you, whose pure and lofty words alone kept smouldering in me the dim remembrance that there was a Right, a Truth, an unseen world of spirits, after whose pattern man should aspire to live?"

She paused, and listened in wonder What faith had she of her own? She would at least hear what he had found. . . .

"Hypatia, I am older than you—wiser than you, if wisdom be the fruit of the tree of knowledge. You know but one side of the medal, Hypatia, and the

fairer; I have seen its reverse as well as its obverse. Through every form of human thought, of human action, of human sin and folly, have I been wandering for years, and found no rest—as little in wisdom as in folly, in spiritual dreams as in sensual brutality. I could not rest in your Platonism—I will tell you why hereafter. I went on to Stoicism, Epicurism, Cynicism, Skepticism, and in that lowest deep I found a lower depth, when I became skeptical of skepticism itself."

"Then in utter abasement I confessed myself lower than the brutes, who had a law, and obeyed it, while I was my own lawless God, devil, harpy, whirlwind. . . . I needed even my own dog to awaken in me the brute consciousness of my own existence, or of anything without myself. I took her, the dog, for my teacher, and obeyed her, for she was wiser than I. And she led me back—the poor dumb beast—like a God-sent and God-obeying angel, to human nature, to mercy, to self-sacrifice, to belief, to worship—" . . . . . .

"I told you that, like Diogenes, I went forth to seek a man. Did I not promise you, that when I had found one you should be the first to hear of him? And I have found a man."

Hypatia waved her beautiful hand. "I know whom you would say . . . that crucified one. Be it so. I want not a man, but a god."

"What sort of a god, Hypatia? A god made up of our own intellectual notions, or rather of negations of them—of infinity, and eternity, and invisibility, and impassibility, and why not of immortality, too, Hypatia? For I recollect we used to agree that it was a carnal degrading of the Supreme One to predicate of Him so merely human a thing as virtue."

Hypatia was silent.

"Now I have always had a sort of fancy that what we wanted, as the first predicate of our Absolute One, was that he was to be not merely an infinite God—whatever that meant, which I suspect we did not always see quite clearly—or an eternal one—or an omnipotent one—or even merely a one God at all; none of which predicates, I fear, did we understand more clearly than the first: but that He must be a righteous God:—or rather, as we used sometimes to say, that He was to have no predicate—Righteousness itself. And all along I could not help remembering that my old sacred Hebrew books told me of such a one; and feeling that they might have something to tell me which———"

"Which I did not tell you! And this, then, caused your air of reserve, and of sly superiority over the woman whom you mocked by calling her your pupil! I little suspected you of so truly Jewish a jealousy! why, oh, why, did you not tell me this?"

"Because I was a beast, Hypatia; and had all but

forgotten what this righteousness was like; and was afraid to find out lest it should condemn me. Because I was a devil, Hypatia; and hated righteousness, and neither wished to see you righteous, or God righteous either, because then you would both have been unlike myself. God be merciful to me a sinner!"

She looked up in his face. The man was changed as if by a miracle—and yet not changed. There was the same gallant consciousness of power, the same subtle and humorous twinkle in those strong, ripe, Jewish features and those glittering eyes: and yet every line in his face was softened, sweetened; the mask of sneering *faineance* was gone—imploring tenderness and earnestness beamed from his whole countenance. The chrysalis case had fallen off, and disclosed the butterfly within. She sat looking at him, and passed her hand across her eyes, as if to try whether the apparition would not vanish. He, the subtle! he, the mocker! he, the Lucian of Alexandria! he whose depth and power had awed her, even in his most polluted days. . . . And this was the end of him. . . .

"It is a freak of cowardly superstition. . . . Those Christians have been frightening him about his sins and their Tartarus."

She looked again into his bright, clear, fearless face, and was ashamed of her own calumny. And

this was the end of him—of Synesius—of Augustine—of learned and unlearned, Goth and Roman. . . . The great flood would have its way, then. . . . Could she alone fight against it!

She could! Would she submit? She? Her will should stand firm, her reason free, to the last—to the death, if need be. . . .

At last she spoke, without looking up.

"And what if you have found a man in that crucified one? Have you found in him a God also?"

"Does Hypatia recollect Glaucon's definition of the perfectly righteous man? . . . How, without being guilty of one unrighteous act, he must labor his life long under the imputation of being utterly unrighteous, in order that his disinterestedness may be thoroughly tested, and by proceeding in such a course, arrive inevitably, as Glaucon says, not only in Athens of old, or in Judea of old, but, as you yourself will agree, in Christian Alexandria at this moment, at—do you remember, Hypatia?—bonds, and the scourge, and lastly, at the cross itself. . . . If Plato's idea of the righteous man be a crucified one, why may not mine also? If as we both—and old Bishop Clemens, too—as good a Platonist as we, remember—and Augustine himself would agree, Plato in speaking those strange words, spoke not of himself, but by the Spirit of God, why should

not others have spoken by the same Spirit when they spoke the same words?"

"A crucified man. . . . Yes. But a crucified God, Raphael! I shudder at the blasphemy."

"So do my poor dear fellow-countrymen. Are they the more righteous in their daily doings, Hypatia, on account of their fancied reverence for the glory of One who probably knows best how to preserve and manifest His own glory? But you assent to the definition? Take care!" said he, with one of his arch smiles, "I have been fighting with Augustine, and have become of late a terrible dialectician. . . .

"And you would have me give up, as you seem to have done, the sublime, the beautiful, the heavenly, for a dry and barred chain of dialectic—in which, for aught I know—for after all, Raphael, I cannot cope with you—I am a woman—a weak woman!"

And she covered her face with her hands.

"For aught you know, what?" asked Raphael gently.

"You may have made the worse appear the better reason."

"So said Aristophanes of Socrates. But hear me once more, beloved Hypatia. You refuse to give up the beautiful, the sublime, the heavenly? What if Raphael Aben-Ezra, at least, had never found them till now? Recollect what I said just now—what if

our Beautiful, and Sublime, and Heavenly, had been the sheerest materialism, notions spun by our own brains out of the impressions of pleasant things, and high things, and low things, and awful things, which we had seen with our bodily eyes? What if I had discovered that the spiritual is not the intellectual, but the moral; and that the spiritual world is not, as we used to make it, a world of our own intellectual abstractions, or of our own physical emotions, religious or other, but a world of righteous or unrighteous persons? What if I had discovered that one law of the spiritual world, in which others were contained, was righteousness, and that disharmony with that law, which we called unspirituality, was not being vulgar, or clumsy, or ill-taught, or unimaginative, or dull, but simply being unrighteous? What if I had discovered that righteousness, and it alone, was the beautiful, righteousness the sublime, the heavenly, the God-like—aye, God himself? And, what if it had dawned on me, as by a great sunrise, what that righteousness was like? What if I had seen a human being, a woman, too, a young, weak girl, showing forth the glory and the beauty of God? Showing me that the beautiful was to mingle unshrinking, for duty's sake, with all that is most foul and loathsome: that the sublime was to stoop to the most menial offices, the most outwardly degrading self-denials; that to be heavenly, was to know that the commonest re-

lations, the most vulgar duties, of earth, were God's commands, and only to be performed aright by the help of the same spirit by which He rules the Universe; that righteousness was to love, to suffer for—if need be, to die for—those who, in themselves, seem fitted to arouse no feelings except indignation and disgust? What if, for the first time, I trust not for the last time, in my life I saw this vision; and at the sight of it my eyes were opened and I knew it for the likeness and the glory of God? What if I, a Platonist, like John of Galilee, and Paul of Tarsus, yet, like them, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, had confessed to myself: If the creature can love thus, how much more its archetype? If weak woman can endure thus, how much more a Son of God? If for the good of others, man has strength to sacrifice himself in part, God will have strength to sacrifice Himself utterly. If He has not done it, He will do it; or He will be less beautiful, less sublime, less heavenly, less righteous than my poor conception of Him, aye, than this weak, playful girl! Why should I not believe those who tell me that He has done it already? What if their evidence be, after all, only probability? I do not want mathematical demonstration to prove to me that when a child was in danger its father saved him—neither do I here. My reason, my heart, every faculty of me, except this stupid sensuous experience, which I find deceiving you every moment,

which cannot even prove to me my own existence, accepts that story of Calvary as the most natural, most probable, most necessary of earthly events, assuming only that God is a righteous Person, and not some dream of an all-pervading necessary spirit —nonsense which, in its very terms, confesses its own materialism."

Hypatia answered with a forced smile.

"And if He be righteous, and righteousness be—as I know it to be—identical with love, then He will desire that highest good for men far more than they can desire it for themselves. . . . Then He will desire to show Himself and His own righteousness to them. . . . Will you make answer, dearest Hypatia, or shall I? . . . or does your silence give consent? At least let me go on to say this, that if God do desire to show His righteousness to men, His only perfect method, according to Plato, will be that of calumny, persecution, the scourge, and the cross, that so he, like Glaucon's righteous man, may remain forever free from any suspicion of selfish interest, or weakness of endurance. . . . You are still silent? You will not hear me, I see. . . . At some future day, the philosopher may condescend to lend a kinder ear to the words of her greatest debtor. . . Or, rather, she may condescend to hear, in her own heart, the voice of that Archetypal Man, who has been loving her, guiding her, heaping her with every

perfection of body and mind, inspiring her with all pure and noble longing, and only asks of her to listen to her own reason, her own philosophy, when they proclaim him as the giver of them, and to impart them freely and humbly, as He has imparted them to her, to the poor, and the brutish, and the sinful, whom He loves as well as He loves her. . . . Farewell!"

"Stay!" said she, springing up; "whither are you going?"

"To do a little good before I die, having done much evil. . . . . .

"Farewell!"

"Stay!" said she. "Come again! again!" . .

"You need not have feared me. I have no heart to make converts now. . . . O Raphael Aben-Ezra, why break the bruised reed? My plans are scattered to the winds, my pupils worthless, my fair name tarnished, my conscience heavy with the thought of my own cruelty." . . .

Raphael stood looking sadly at her, as her whole face sank into utter prostration.

. . . . . .

"Yes--come. . . . The Galilæan. . . . If he conquers strong men, can the weak maid resist him? Come soon. . . . This afternoon. . . . My heart is breaking fast."

"At the eighth hour this afternoon?"

"Yes. . . . At noon I lecture . . . take my farewell, rather, forever of the schools. . . . Gods! What have I to say? . . . And tell me about Him of Nazareth. Farewell!"

"Farewell, beloved lady! At the ninth hour, you shall hear of Him of Nazareth."

Why did his own words sound to him strangely pregnant, all but ominous? He almost fancied that not he, but some third person had spoken them. He kissed Hypatia's hand. It was as cold as ice; and his heart, too, in spite of all his bliss, felt cold and heavy, as he left the room.

As he went down the steps into the street, a young man sprang from behind one of the pillars, and seized his arm.

"Aha! my young Coryphæus of pious plunderers! What do you want with me?"

Philammon, for it was he, looked at him an instant, and recognized him.

"Save her! for the love of God, save her!"

"Whom?"

"Hypatia!"

"How long has her salvation been important to you, my good friend?"

"For God's sake," said Philammon, "go back and warn her! She will hear you—you are rich—you used to be her friend—I know you—I have heard of you. . . . Oh, if you ever cared for her

—if you ever felt for her a thousandth part of what I feel—go in and warn her not to stir from home!"

"I must hear more of this," said Raphael, who saw that the boy was in earnest. "Come in with me, and speak to her father."

"No! not in that house! Never in that house again! Do not ask me why: but go yourself. She will not hear me. Did you—did you prevent her from listening?"

"What do you mean?"

"I have been here—ages! I sent a note in by her maid, and she returned no answer."

Raphael recollected then, for the first time, a note which he had seen brought to her during the conversation.

"I saw her receive a note. She tossed it away. Tell me your story. If there is reason in it, I will bear your message myself. Of what is she to be warned?"

"Of a plot—I know that there is a plot—against her among the monks and parabolani. As I lay in bed this morning in Arsenius's room—they thought I was asleep——"

"Arsenius? Has that venerable fanatic, then, gone the way of all monastic flesh, and turned persecutor?"

"God forbid! I heard him beseeching Peter the Reader to refrain from something, I cannot tell

what; but I caught her name. . . . I heard Peter say, 'She that hindereth, will hinder till she be taken out of the way.' And when he went out into the passage I heard him say to another, 'That thou doest, do quickly!'"

"These are slender grounds, my friend."

"Ah, you do not know of what those men are capable!"

"I know the hatred which they bear her, the crimes which they attribute to her. . . . And I knew Peter's tone. He spoke too gently and softly not to mean something devilish. I watched all the morning for an opportunity of escape, and here I am! Will you take my message, or see her——"

"What?"

"God only knows, and the devil whom they worship instead of God."

Raphael hurried back into the house—"Could he see Hypatia?" She had shut herself up in her private room, strictly commanding that no visitor should be admitted. . . . "Where was Theon, then?" He had gone out by the canal-gate half an hour before, with a bundle of mathematical papers under his arm, no one knew whither. . . .

"Imbecile old idiot!" and he hastily wrote on the tablet—

"Do not despise the young monk's warning. I believe him to speak the truth. As you love

yourself and your father, Hypatia, stir not out to-day."

He bribed a maid to take the message up-stairs; and passed his time in the hall in warning the servants. But they would not believe him. . . .

At last the answer came down, in the old graceful, studied, self-conscious handwriting.

"It is a strange way of persuading me to your new faith, to bid me beware, on the very first day of your preaching, of the wickedness of those who believe it. I thank you; but your affection for me makes you timorous. I dread nothing. They will not dare. Did they dare now, they would have dared long ago. . . . I must follow my destiny. I must speak the words which I have to speak. Above all, I must let no Christian say, that the philosopher dared less than the fanatic. If my gods are gods, then will they protect me: and if not, let your God prove His rule as seems to Him good."

Raphael tore the letter to fragments. . . . The guards, at least, were not gone mad like the rest of the world. It wanted half an hour of the time of her lecture. In the interval he might summon force enough to crush all Alexandria. And turning suddenly, he darted out of the room and out of the house.

"*Quem Deus vult perdere*—!" cried he to Philammon, with a gesture of grief. "Stay here and

stop her! make a last appeal. Drag the horses' heads down, if you can! I will be back in ten minutes." And he ran off for the nearest gate of the Museum gardens.

. . . . . .

There Philammon waited a full half-hour. It seemed to him hours, days, years. And yet Raphael did not return; and yet no guards appeared. Was the strange Jew a traitor? Impossible! his face had shown a desperate earnestness of terror as intense as Philammon's own. . . . Yet why did he not return?

Perhaps he had found out that the streets were clear—their mutual fears groundless. . . . What meant that black knot of men some two hundred yards off, hanging about the mouth of the side street, just opposite the door which led to her lecture-room? He moved to watch them: they had vanished. He lay down again and waited. . . . There they were again. It was a suspicious post. That street ran along the back of the Cæsareum, a favorite haunt of monks, communicating by innumerable entries and back buildings with the great church itself. . . . And yet, why should there not be a knot of monks there? What more common in every street of Alexandria? He tried to laugh away his own fears. And yet they ripened, by the very intensity of thinking on them, into certainty. He knew that something terrible was at hand. More than once he looked out

from his hiding place—the knot of men were still there; . . . it seemed to have increased, to draw nearer. If they found him, what would they not suspect? What did he care? He would die for her if it came to that—not that it would come to that: but still he must speak to her—he must warn her. Passenger after passenger, carriage after carriage passed along the street: student after student entered the lecture-room: but he never saw them, not though they passed him close. The sun rose higher and higher, and turned his whole blaze upon the corner where Philammon crouched, till the pavement scorched like hot iron, and his eyes were dazzled by the blinding glare: but he never heeded it His whole heart, and sense, and sight were riveted upon that well-known door, expecting it to open. . . .

At last, a curricle, glittering with silver, rattled round the corner and stopped opposite him. She must be coming now. The crowd had vanished. Perhaps it was, after all, a fancy of his own. No; there they were, peeping round the corner, close to the lecture-room—the hell-hounds! A slave brought out an embroidered cushion—and then Hypatia herself came forth, looking more glorious than ever; her lips set in a sad firm smile; her eyes uplifted, inquiring, eager, and yet gentle, dimmed by some great inward awe, as if her soul was far away, aloft, and face to face with God.

In a moment he sprang up to her, caught her robe convulsively, threw himself on his knees before her—

"Stop! Stay! You are going to destruction!"

Calmly she looked down upon him.

"Would you make of Theon's daughter a traitor like yourself?"

He sprang up, stepped back, and stood stupefied with shame and despair. . . . .

The plumes of the horses were waving far down the street before he recovered himself, and rushed after her, shouting he knew not what.

It was too late! A dark wave of men rushed from the ambuscade, surged up round the car . . . swept forward . . . she had disappeared! and as Philammon followed breathless, the horses galloped past him madly homeward with the empty carriage.

Whither were they dragging her? To the Cæsareum, the Church of God himself? Impossible! Why thither of all places of the earth? Why did the mob, increasing momentarily by hundreds, pour down upon the beach, and return brandishing flints, shells, fragments of pottery?

She was upon the church steps before he caught them up, invisible among the crowd; but he could track her by the fragments of her dress.

Where were her gay pupils now? Alas! they had barricaded themselves shamefully in the Museum, at

the first rush which swept her from the door of the lecture-room. Cowards! he would save her!

And he struggled in vain to pierce the dense mass of parabolani and monks, who, mingled with the fish-wives and dock-workers, leaped and yelled around their victim. But what he could not do another and a weaker did—even the little porter. Furiously—no one knew how or whence—he burst up, as if from the ground in the thickest of the crowd, with knife, teeth, and nails, like a venomous wild-cat, tearing his way toward his idol. Alas! he was torn down himself, rolled over the steps, and lay there half dead in an agony of weeping, as Philammon sprang up past him into the church.

"Yes. On into the church itself! Into the cool dim shadow, with its fretted pillars, and lowering domes, and candles, and incense, and blazing altar, and great pictures looking from the walls athwart the gorgeous gloom. And right in front, above the altar, the colossal Christ, watching unmoved from off the wall, his right hand raised to give a blessing—or a curse?

On, up the nave, fresh shreds of her dress strewing the holy pavement—up the chancel steps themselves—up to the altar—right underneath the great still Christ: and there even those hell-hounds paused.

. . . . . .

She shook herself free from her tormentors, and

springing back, rose for one moment to her full height, naked, snow-white against the dusky mass around—shame and indignation in those wide clear eyes, but not a stain of fear. With one hand she clasped her golden locks around her, the other long white arm was stretched upward toward the great still Christ appealing—and who dare say, in vain?—from man to God. Her lips were opened to speak; but the words that should have come from them reached God's ear alone; for an instant Peter struck her down, the dark mass closed over her again . . . and then wail on wail, long, wild, ear-piercing, rang along the vaulted roofs, and thrilled like the trumpet of avenging angels through Philammon's ears.

Crushed against a pillar, unable to move in the dense mass, he pressed his hand over his ears. He could not shut out those shrieks! When would they end? What in the name of the God of mercy were they doing? Tearing her piecemeal? Yes, and worse than that. And still the shrieks rang on, and still the great Christ looked down on Philammon with that calm, intolerable eye, and would not turn away. And over his head was written in the rainbow, "I am the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever!" The same as he was in Judæa of old, Philammon? Then what are these, and in whose temple? And he covered his face with his hands, and longed to die.

It was over. The shrieks had died away into moans; the moans to silence. How long had he been there? An hour, or an eternity? Thank God it was over! For her sake—but for theirs? But they thought not of that as a new cry rose through the dome.

"To the Cinaron! Burn the bones to ashes! Scatter them into the sea!" . . . And the mob poured past him again. . . .

He turned to flee: but, once outside the church, he sank exhausted, and lay upon the steps, watching with stupid horror the glaring of the fire, and the mob who leaped and yelled like demons round their Moloch sacrifice.

A hand grasped his arm; he looked up; it was the porter.

"And this, young butcher, is the Catholic and Apostolic Church?"

"No! Eudæmon, it is the church of the devils of hell!" And gathering himself up, he sat upon the steps and buried his head within his hands. He would have given life itself for the power of weeping; but his eyes and brain were hot and dry as the desert.

Eudæmon looked at him a while. The shock had sobered the poor fop for once,

"I did what I could to die with her," said he.

"I did what I could to save her," answered Philammon.

"I know it. Forgive the words which I just spoke. Did we not both love her?"

And the little wretch sat down by Philammon's side, and as the blood dripped from his wounds upon the pavement, broke out into a bitter agony of human tears.

There are times when the very intensity of our misery is a boon, and kindly stuns us till we are unable to torture ourselves by thought. And so it was with Philammon then. He sat there, he knew not how long.

"She is with the gods," said Eudæmon at last.

"She is with the God of gods," answered Philammon.

HEREWARD,

THE LAST OF THE ENGLISH.

HEREWARD,

THE LAST OF THE ENGLISH.

HOW HEREWARD WAS OUTLAWED, AND WENT NORTH TO SEEK HIS FORTUNES.

KNOWN to all is Lady Godiva, the most beautiful as well as the most saintly woman of her day; who, "all her life, kept at her own expense thirteen poor folk wherever she went; who, throughout Lent, watched in the church at triple matins, namely, one for the Trinity, one for the Cross, and one for St. Mary; who every day read the Psalter through, and so persevered in good and holy works to her life's end,"—the "devoted friend of St. Mary, ever a virgin," who enriched monasteries without number,—Leominster, Wenlock, Chester, St. Mary's Stow by Lincoln, Worcester, Evesham; and who, above all, founded the great monastery in that town of Coventry, which has made her name immortal for another and a far nobler deed; and enriched it so much "that no monastery in England possessed such abundance of

gold, silver, jewels, and precious stones," beside that most precious jewel of all, the arm of St. Augustine, which not Lady Godiva, but her friend, Archbishop Ethelnoth, presented to Coventry, "having bought it at Pavia for a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold."*

Less known, save to students, is her husband, Leofric the great Earl of Mercia and Chester, whose bones lie by those of Godiva in that same minster of Coventry; how "his counsel was as if one had opened the Divine oracles"; very wise," says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, "for God and for the world, which was a blessing to all this nation"; the greatest man, save his still greater rival, Earl Godwin, in Edward, the Confessor's court.

Less known, again, are the children of that illustrious pair; Algar, or Alfgar, Earl of Mercia after his father, who died, after a short and stormy life, leaving two sons, Edwin and Morcar, the fair and hapless young earls, always spoken of together, as if they had been twins; a daughter, Aldytha, or Elfgiva, married first (according to some) to Griffin, King of North Wales, and certainly afterwards to Harold, King of England; and another, Lucia (as the Normans at least called her), whose fate was, if possible, more sad than that of her brothers.

Their second son was Hereward, whose history

* William of Malmesbury.

this tale sets forth; their third and youngest, a boy whose name is unknown.

They had, probably, another daughter beside; married, it may be, to some son of Leofric's stanch friend old Siward Biorn, the Viking Earl of Northumberland, and conqueror of Macbeth; and the mother, may be, of the two young Siwards, the "white" and the "red," who figure in chronicle and legend as the nephews of Hereward. But this pedigree is little more than a conjecture.

Be these things as it may, Godiva was the greatest lady in England, save two: Edith, Harold's sister, the nominal wife of Edward the Confessor; and Githa, or Gida, as her own Danes called her, Harold's mother, niece of Canute the Great. Great was Godiva; and might have been proud enough, had she been inclined to that pleasant sin. And even then (for there is a skeleton, they say, in every house) she carried that about her which might well keep her humble; namely, shame at the misconduct of Hereward, her son. . . . . .

Now on a day—about the year 1054—Lady Godiva sat, not at her hall door, dealing food and clothing to her thirteen poor folk, but in her bower, with her youngest son, a two years' boy, at her knee. She was listening, with a face of shame and horror, to the complaint of Herluin, Steward of Peterborough, who had fallen in that afternoon with Hereward and his crew of "housecarles."

They had met him riding along, intent upon his psalter, in a lonely path of the Bruneswald,—"whereon your son, most gracious lady, bade me stand, saying that his men were thirsty and he had no money to buy ale withal, and none so likely to help him thereto as a fat priest,—for so he scandalously termed me, who, as your ladyship knows, am leaner than the minster bell-ropes, with fasting Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year, besides the vigils of the saints, and the former and latter Lents.

"But when he saw who I was, as if inspired by a malignant spirit, he shouted out my name, and bade his companions throw me to the ground."

"Throw you to the ground?" shuddered the Lady Godiva.

"In much mire, madam. After which he took my palfrey, saying that heaven's gate was too lowly for men on horseback to get in thereat; and then my marten's fur gloves and cape which your gracious self bestowed on me, alleging that the rules of my order allowed only one garment, and no furs save catskins and such like. And lastly—I tremble while I relate, thinking not of the loss of my poor money, but the loss of an immortal soul—took from me a purse with sixteen silver pennies, which I had collected from our tenants for the use of the monastery, and said, blasphemously, that I and mine had swindled your ladyship, and therefore him, your son, out

of many a fair manor ere now; and it was but fair that he should tithe the rents thereof, as he should never get the lands out of our claws again; with more of the like, which I blush to repeat,—and so left me to trudge hither in the mire."

"Wretched boy!" said the Lady Godiva, and hid her face in her hands; "and more wretched I, to have brought such a son into the world!"

The monk had hardly finished his doleful story, when there was a pattering of heavy feet, a noise of men shouting and laughing outside, and a voice, above all, calling for the monk by name, which made that good man crouch behind the curtain of Lady Godiva's bed. The next moment the door of the bower was thrown violently open, and in walked, or rather reeled, a noble lad eighteen years old. His face was of extraordinary beauty, save that the lower jaw was too long and heavy, and that his eyes wore a strange and almost sinister expression, from the fact that the one of them was gray and the other blue. He was short, but of immense breadth of chest and strength of limb; while his delicate hands and feet and long locks of golden hair marked him of most noble, and even, as he really was, of ancient royal race. He was dressed in a gaudy costume, resembling on the whole that of a Highland chieftain. His knees, wrists, and throat were tattooed in bright blue patterns; and he carried sword and dagger, a gold

ring round his neck, and gold rings on his wrists. He was a lad to have gladdened the eyes of any mother: but there was no gladness in the Lady Godiva's eyes as she received him; nor had there been for many a year. She looked on him with sternness, —with all but horror; and he, his face flushed with wine, which he had tossed off as he passed through the hall to steady his nerves for the coming storm, looked at her with smiling defiance, the result of long estrangement between mother and son.

"Well, my lady," said he, ere she could speak, "I heard that this good fellow was here, and came home as fast as I could, to see that he told you as few lies as possible."

"He has told me," said she, "that you have robbed the Church of God."

"Robbed him, it may be, an old hoody crow, against whom I have a grudge of ten years' standing."

"Wretched, wretched boy! What wickedness next? Know you not, that he who robs the Church robs God himself?"

"And he who harms God's people," put in the monk from behind the chair, "harms his Maker."

"His Maker?" said the lad, with concentrated bitterness. "It would be a gay world, if the Maker thereof were in any way like unto you, who call yourselves his people. Do you remember who told them to set

the peat-stack on fire under me ten years ago? Ah, ha, Sir Monk, you forget that I have been behind the screen,—that I have been a monk myself, or should have been one, if my pious lady mother here had her will of me, as she may if she likes of that doll there at her knee. Do you forget why I left Peterborough Abbey, when Winter and I turned all your priest's books upside down in the choir, and they would have flogged us,—me, the Earl's son—me, the Viking's son,—me, the champion, as I will be yet, and make all lands ring with the fame of my deeds, as they rung with the fame of my fore-fathers, before they became the slaves of monks; and how, when Winter and I got hold of the kitchen spits, and up to the top of the peat-stack, and held you all at bay there, a whole abbeyful of cowards there, against two seven years' children? It was you bade set the peat-stack alight under us, and so bring us down; and would have done it, too, had it not been for my Uncle Brand, the only man that I care for in this wide world. Do you think I have not owed you a grudge ever since that day, monk? And do you think I will not pay it? Do you think I would not have burned Peterborough minster over your head before now, had it not been for Uncle Brand's sake? See that I do not do it yet. See that when there is another Prior in Borough you do not find Hereward the Berserker smoking you out some

dark night, as he would smoke a wasp's nest. And I will, by—"

"Hereward, Hereward!" cried his mother, "godless, God-forgotten boy, what words are these? Silence, before you burden your soul with an oath which the devils in hell will accept, and force you to keep!" and she sprang up, and seizing his arm, laid her hand upon his mouth.

Hereward looked at her majestic face, once lovely, now careworn, and trembled for a moment. Had there been any tenderness in it, his history might have been a very different one: but alas! there was none. Not that she was in herself untender; but that her great piety (call it not superstition, for it was then the only form known or possible to pure and devout souls) was so outraged by this, or even by the slightest insult to that clergy whose willing slave she had become, that the only method of reclaiming the sinner had been long forgotten, in genuine horror at his sin. "Is it not enough," she went on, sternly, "that you should have become the bully and the ruffian of all the fens?—that Hereward the leaper, Hereward the wrestler, Hereward the thrower of the hammer—sports, after all, only fit for the sons of slaves—should be also Hereward the drunkard, Hereward the common fighter, Hereward the breaker of houses, Hereward the leader of mobs of boon companions which bring back to us, in shame and

sorrow, the days when our heathen forefathers ravaged this land with fire and sword? Is it not enough for me that my son should be a common stabber—?"

"Whoever called me stabber to you lies. If I have killed men, or had them killed, I have done it in fair fight."

But she went on unheeding,—"Is it not enough, that, after having squandered on your fellows all the money that you could wring from my bounty, or win at your brutal sports, you should have robbed your own father, collected his rents behind his back, taken money and goods from his tenants by threats and blows: but that, after outraging them, you must add to all this a worse sin, likewise,—outraging God, and driving me—me who have borne with you, me who have concealed all for your sake—to tell your father that of which the very telling will turn my hair to gray?"

"So you will tell my father?" said Hereward coolly.

"And if I should not, this monk himself is bound to do so, or his superior, your Uncle Brand."

"My Uncle Brand will not, and your monk dare not."

"Then I must. I have loved you long and well; but there is one thing which I must love better than you; and that is, my conscience and My Maker."

"Those are two things, my lady mother, and not one; so you had better not confound them. As for the latter, do you not think that He who made the world is well able to defend his own property,—if the lands and houses and cattle and money which these men wheedle and threaten and forge out of you and my father are really his property, and not merely their plunder? As for your conscience, my lady mother, really you have done so many good deeds in your life, that it might be beneficial to you to do a bad one once in a way, so as to keep your soul in a wholesome state of humanity."

The monk groaned aloud. Lady Godiva groaned; but it was inwardly. There was silence for a moment. Both were abashed by the lad's utter shamelessness.

"And you will tell my father?" said he again. "He is at the old miracle-worker's court at Westminster. He will tell the miracle-worker, and I shall be outlawed."

"And if you be, wretched boy, whom have you to blame but yourself? Can you expect that the king, sainted even as he is before his death, dare pass over such an atrocity towards Holy Church?"

"Blame? I shall blame no one. Pass over? I hope he will not pass over it. I only want an excuse like that for turning kempery man,—knight-errant as those Norman puppies call it,—like Regnar Lodbrog,

or Frithiof, or Harold Hardraade; and try what man can do for himself in the world with nothing to help him in heaven and earth, with neither saint nor angel, friend or counsellor, to see to him, save his wits and his good sword. So send off the messenger, good mother mine: and I will promise you I will not have him ham-strung on the way, as some of my housecarles would do for me if I but held up my hand; and let the miracle-monger fill up the measure of his folly, by making an enemy of one more bold fellow in the world."

And he swaggered out of the room.

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It was four o'clock on a May morning, when Hereward set out to see the world, with good armor on his back, good weapon by his side, good horse between his knees, and good money in his purse. What could a lad of eighteen want more, who under the harsh family rule of those times had known nothing of a father's, and but too little of a mother's, love? He rode away northward through the Bruneswald, over the higher land of Lincolnshire, through primeval glades of mighty oak and ash, holly and thorn, swarming with game, which was as highly preserved then as now, under Canute's severe forest laws. The yellow roes stood and stared at him knee-deep

in the young fern; the peasant called his hens out to feed in the dewy grass; the blackbird and thrush sang out from every bough; the wood-lark trilled above the high oak-tops, and sank down on them as his song sank down. And Hereward rode on, rejoicing in it all. . . . . .

As he rode on slowly though cheerfully, as a man who will not tire his horse at the beginning of a long day's journey, and knows not where he shall pass the night, he was aware of a man on foot coming up behind him at a slow, steady, loping, wolf-like trot, which in spite of its slowness gained ground on him so fast, that he saw at once that the man could be no common runner.

The man came up; and behold, he was none other than Martin Lightfoot.

"What! art thou here?" asked Hereward, suspiciously, and half cross at seeing any visitor from the old world which he had just cast off. 'How gottest thou out of St. Peter's last night?"

Martin's tongue was hanging out of his mouth like a running hound's, but he seemed, like a hound, to perspire through his mouth, for he answered without the least sign of distress, without even pulling in his tongue,—

"Over the wall, the moment the Prior's back was turned. I was not going to wait till I was chained up in some rat's hole with a half-hundred of iron on

my leg, and flogged till I confessed that I was what I am not,—a runaway monk."

"And why art here?"

"Because I am going with you."

"Going with me?" said Hereward; "what can I do for thee?"

"I can do for you," said Martin.

"What?"

"Groom your horse, wash your shirt, clean your weapons, find your inn, fight your enemies, cheat your friends,—anything and everything. You are going to see the world. I am going with you."

"Thou canst be my servant? A right slippery one, I expect," said Hereward, looking down on him with some suspicion. "Now, what has made thee take service with me?"

"Because you are you."

"Give me none of your parables and dark sayings, but speak out like a man. What canst see in me that thou shouldst share an outlaw's fortune with me?"

"I had run away from a monastery, so had you; I hated the monks, so did you; I liked to tell stories,—since I found good to shut my mouth I tell them to myself all day long, sometimes all night too. When I found out you liked to hear them, I loved you all the more. Then they told me not to speak to you; I held my tongue. I bided my time. I knew you

would be outlawed some day. I knew you would turn Viking and kemperyman, and kill giants and enchanters, and win yourself honor and glory; and I knew I should have my share in it. I knew you would need me some day; and you need me now, and here I am; and if you try to cut me down with your sword, I will dodge you, and follow you, and dodge you again, till I force you to let me be your man, for with you I will live and die. And now I can talk no more."

"And with me thou shalt live and die," said Hereward, pulling up his horse, and frankly holding out his hand to his new friend.

Martin Lightfoot took his hand, kissed it, licked it almost as a dog would have done. "I am your man," he said. "Amen; and true man I will prove to you, if you will prove true to me." And he dropped quietly back behind Hereward's horse, as if the business of his life was settled, and his mind utterly at rest.

And so those two went northward through the green Bruneswald, and northward again through merry Sherwood, and were not seen in that land again for many a year.

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HOW HEREWARD SUCCORED A PRINCESS OF CORNWALL.

THE next place in which Hereward appeared was far away on the southwest, upon the Cornish shore. How he came there, or after how long, the chronicles do not say. All that shall be told is, that he went into port on board a merchant ship carrying wine, and intending to bring back tin. The merchants had told him of one Alef, a valiant "regulus" or kinglet of those parts, who was indeed a distant connection of Hereward himself, having married, as did so many of the Celtic princes, the daughter of a Danish sea-rover, of Siward's blood. They told him also that the kinglet increased his wealth, not only by the sale of tin and of red cattle, but by a certain amount of autumnal piracy in company with his Danish brothers-in-law from Dublin and Waterford; and Hereward, who believed, with most Englishmen of the East Country, that Cornwall still produced a fair crop of giants, some of them with two and even three heads, had hopes that Alef might show him some adventure worthy of his sword. He sailed in, therefore, over a rolling bar, between jagged points of black rock, and up a tide river which wandered away inland, like a land-locked lake, between high green walls of oak and ash, till they saw at the head of the

tide Alef's town, nestling in a glen which slopea towards the southern sun. They discovered, besides, two ships drawn up upon the beach, whose long lines and snake-heads, beside the stoat carved on the beak-head of one, and the adder on that of the other, bore witness to the piratical habits of their owner. The merchants, it seemed, were well-known to the Cornishmen on shore, and Hereward went up with them unopposed; past the ugly dykes and muddy leats, where Alef's slaves were streaming the gravel for tin ore; through rich alluvial pastures spotted with red cattle, and up to Alef's town. Earthworks stockades surrounded a little church of ancient stone, and a cluster of granite cabins thatched with turf, in which the slaves abode, and in the centre of all a vast stone barn, with low walls and high sloping roof, which contained Alef's family, treasures, fighting tail, horses, cattle, and pigs. They entered at one end between the pigsties, passed on through the cow-stalls, then through the stables, and saw before them, dim through the reek of thick peat-smoke, a long oaken table, at which sat huge dark-haired Cornishmen, with here and there among them the yellow head of a Norseman, who were Alef's following of fighting-men. Boiled meat was there in plenty, barley cakes, and ale. At the head of the table, on a high-backed settle, was Alef himself, a jolly giant, who was just setting to work to drink himself stupid

with mead made from narcotic heather honey. By his side sat a lovely dark-haired girl, with great gold torcs upon her throat and wrists, and a great gold brooch fastening a shawl which had plainly come from the looms of Spain or of the East, and next to her again, feeding her with titbits cut off with his own dagger, and laid on barley cake instead of a plate, sat a more gigantic personage even than Alef, the biggest man that Hereward had ever seen, with high cheek-bones, and small ferret eyes, looking out from a greasy mass of bright red hair and beard.

No questions were asked of the new-comers. They set themselves down in silence in empty places, and, according to the laws of the good old Cornish hospitality, were allowed to eat and drink their fill before they spoke a word.

"Welcome here again, friends," said Alef at last, in good enough Danish, calling the eldest merchant by name.

"Do you bring wine?"

The merchant nodded.

"And you want tin?"

The merchant nodded again, and lifting his cup drank Alef's health, following it up by a coarse joke in Cornish, which raised a laugh all round.

The Norse trader of those days, it must be remembered, was none of the cringing and effeminate chapmen who figure in the stories of the Middle

Ages. A free Norse or Dane, himself often of noble blood, he fought as willingly as he bought; and held his own as an equal, whether at the court of a Cornish kinglet or at that of the Great Kaiser of the Greeks.

"And you, fair sir," said Alef, looking keenly at Hereward, "by what name shall I call you, and what service can I do for you? You look more like an earl's son than a merchant, and are come here surely for other things besides tin."

"Health to King Alef," said Hereward, raising the cup, "Who I am I will tell to none but Alef's self; but an earl's son I am, though an outlaw and a rover. My lands are the breadth of my boot-sole. My plough is my sword. My treasure is my good right hand. Nothing I have and nothing I need, save to serve noble kings and earls, and win me a champion's fame. If you have battles to fight, tell me, that I may fight them for you. If you have none, thank God for his peace; and let me eat and drink, and go in peace."

"King Alef needs neither man nor boy to fight his battle as long as Ironhook sits in his hall."

It was the red-bearded giant who spoke in a broken tongue, part Scotch, part Cornish, part Danish, which Hereward could hardly understand; but that the ogre intended to insult him he understood well enough.

Hereward had hoped to find giants in Cornwall; and behold he had found one at once; though rather, to judge from his looks, a Pictish than a Cornish giant; and true to his reckless determination to defy and fight every man and beast who was willing to defy and fight him, he turned on his elbow and stared at Ironhook in scorn, meditating some speech which might provoke the hoped-for quarrel.

As he did so his eye happily caught that of the fair Princess. She was watching him with a strange look, admiring, warning, imploring; and when she saw that he noticed her, she laid her finger on her lip in token of silence, crossed herself devoutly, and then laid her finger on her lips again, as if beseeching him to be patient and silent in the name of Him who answered not again.

Hereward, as is well seen, wanted not for quick wit, or for chivalrous feeling. He had observed the rough devotion of the giant to the lady. He had observed, too, that she shrank from it; that she turned away with loathing when he offered her his own cup, while he answered by a dark and deadly scowl.

Was there an adventure here? Was she in duress either from this Ironhook or from her father, or from both? Did she need Hereward's help? If so, she was so lovely that he could not refuse it. And on the chance, he swallowed down his high stomach, and answered blandly enough,—

"One could see without eyes, noble sir, that you were worth any ten common men; but as every one has not like you the luck of so lovely a lady by your side, I thought perchance you might hand over some of your lesser quarrels to one like me, who has not yet seen so much good fighting as yourself, and enjoy yourself in pleasant company at home, as I should surely do in your place."

The Princess shuddered and turned pale; then looked at Hereward and smiled her thanks. Iron-hook laughed a savage laugh.

Hereward's jest being translated into Cornish for the benefit of the company, was highly approved by all; and good humor being restored, every man got drunk save Hereward, who found the mead too sweet and sickening.

After which those who could go to bed went to bed, not as in England,* among the rushes on the floor, but in the bunks or berths of wattle which stood two or three tiers-high along the wall.

The next morning as Hereward went out to wash his face and hands in the brook below (he being the only man in the house who did so), Martin Lightfoot followed him.

"What is it, Martin? Hast thou had too much of that sweet mead last night that thou must come out to cool thy head too?"

* Cornwall was not then considered part of England.

"I came out for two reasons,—first, to see fair play, in case that Ironhook should come to wash his ugly visage, and find you on all fours over the brook —you understand? And next, to tell you what I heard last night among the maids."

"And what did you hear?"

"Fine adventures, if we can but compass them. You saw that lady with the carrot-headed fellow. I saw that you saw. Well, if you will believe me, that man has no more gentle blood that I have,—has no more right to sit on the settle than I. He is a No-man's son, a Pict from Galloway, who came down with a pirate crew and has made himself the master of this drunken old Prince, and the darling of all his housecarles, and now will needs be his son-in-law whether he will or not."

"I thought as much," said Hereward; "but how didst thou find out this?"

"I went out and sat with the knaves and the maids, and listened to their harp-playing, and harp they can, these Cornish, like very elves; and then I, too, sang songs and told them stories, for I can talk their tongue somewhat, till they all blest me for a right good fellow." And then I fell to praising up old Ironhook to the women.

"Praising him up, man?"

"Ay, just because I suspected him; for the women are so contrary, that if you speak evil of a man they

will surely speak good of him; but if you will only speak good of him, then you will hear all the evil of him he has ever done, and more beside. And this I heard; that the King's daughter cannot abide him, and would as lief marry a seal."

"One did not need to be told that," said Hereward, "as long as one has eyes in one's head. I will kill the fellow, and carry her off, ere four-and-twenty hours be past."

"Softly, softly, my young master. You need to be told something that your eyes would not tell you, and that is, that the poor lass is betrothed already to a son of old King Ranald the Osteman, of Waterford, son of old King Sigtryg, who ruled there when I was a boy."

"He is a kinsman of mine, then," said Hereward. "All the more reason that I should kill this ruffian."

"If you can," said Martin Lightfoot.

"If I can?" retorted Hereward, fiercely.

"Well, well. wilful heart must have its way; only take my counsel; speak to the poor young lady first, and see what she will tell you, lest you only make bad worse, and bring down her father and his men on her as well as you."

Hereward agreed, and resolved to watch his opportunity of speaking to the princess.

As they went in to the morning meal they met Alef. He was in high good humor with Hereward; and

all the more so when Hereward told him his name, and how he was the son of Leofric.

"I will warrant you are," he said, "by the gray head you carry on green shoulders. No discreeter man they say, in these isles than the old earl."

"You speak truth sir," said Hereward, "though he be no father of mine now; for of Leofric it is said in King Edward's court, that if a man ask counsel of him, it is as though he asked it of the oracles of God."

"Then you are his true son, young man. I saw how you kept the peace with Ironhook, and I owe you thanks for it; for though he is my good friend, and will be my son-in-law ere long, yet a quarrel with him is more than I can abide just now, and I should not like to have seen my guest and my kinsman slain in my house."

Hereward would have said that he thought there was no fear of that; but he prudently held his tongue, and having an end to gain, listened instead of talking.

"Twenty years ago, of course, I could have thrashed him as easily as—; but now I am getting old and shaky, and the man has been a great help in need. Six kings of these parts has he killed for me, who drove off my cattle, and stopped my tin works, and plundered my monks' cells too, which is worse, while I was away sailing the seas; and he is a right good fellow at heart, though he be a little

rough. So be friends with him so long as you stay here, and if I can do you a service I will.

They went in to their morning meal, at which Hereward resolved to keep the peace which he longed to break, and therefore, as was to be expected, broke.

For during the meal the fair lady, with no worse intention, perhaps, than that of teazing her tyrant, fell to open praises of Hereward's fair face and golden hair; and being insulted therefore by the Ironhook, retaliated by observations about his personal appearance, which were more common in the eleventh century than they happily are now. He, to comfort himself, drank deep of the French wine which had just been brought and broached, and then went out into the court-yard, where, in the midst of his admiring fellow-ruffians, he enacted a scene as ludicrous as it was pitiable. All the childish vanity of the savage boiled over. He strutted, he shouted, he tossed about his huge limbs, he called for a harper, and challenged all around to dance, sing, leap, fight, do anything against him; meeting with nothing but admiring silence, he danced himself out of breath, and then began boasting once more of his fights, his cruelties, his butcheries, his impossible escapes and victories; till at last, as luck would have it, he espied Hereward, and poured out a stream of abuse against Englishmen and English courage.

"Englishmen," he said, "were naught. Had he not slain three of them himself with one blow?"

"Of your mouth, I suppose," quoth Hereward, who saw that the quarrel must come, and was glad to have it done and over.

"Of my mouth," roared Ironhook; "of my sword, man!"

"Of your mouth," said Hereward. "Of your brain were they begotten, of the breath of your mouth they were born, and by the breath of your mouth you can slay them again as often as you choose."

The joke, as it has been handed down to us by the old chroniclers, seems clumsy enough; but it sent the princess, say they, into shrieks of laughter.

"Were it not that my Lord Alef was here," shouted Ironhook, "I would kill you out of hand."

"Promise to fight fair, and do your worst. The more fairly you fight, the more honor you will win," said Hereward.

Whereupon the two were parted for the while.

Two hours afterwards, Hereward, completely armed with helmet and mail-shirt, sword and javelin, hurried across the court-yard, with Martin Lightfoot at his heels, towards the little church on the knoll above. The two wild men entered into the cool darkness, and saw before them, by the light of a tiny lamp, the crucifix over the altar, and beneath it that which was then believed to be the body of Him who

made Heaven and earth. They stopped, trembling, for a moment, bowed themselves before that, to them, perpetual miracle, and then hurried on to a low doorway to the right, inside which dwelt Alef's chaplain, one of those good Celtic priests who were supposed to represent a Christianity more ancient than, and all but independent of, the then all-absorbing Church of Rome.

The cell was such a one as a convict would now disdain to inhabit. A low lean-to roof; the slates and rafters unceiled; the stone walls and floor unplastered; ill-lighted by a hand-broad window, unglazed, and closed with a shutter at night. A truss of straw and a rug, the priest's bed, lay in a corner. The only other furniture was a large oak chest, containing the holy vessels and vestments and a few old books. It stood directly under the window for the sake of light, for it served the good priest for both table and chair; and on it he was sitting reading in his book at that minute, the sunshine and the wind streaming in behind his head, doing no good to his rheumatism of thirty years' standing.

"Is there a priest here?" asked Hereward, hurriedly.

The old man looked up, shook his head, and answered in Cornish.

"Speak to him in Latin, Martin! May be he will understand that."

Martin spoke. "My lord here, wants a priest to shrive him, and that quickly. He is going to fight the great tyrant Ironhook, as you call him."

"Ironhook?" answered the priest in good Latin enough. "And he so young! God help him, he is a dead man! What is this,—a fresh soul sent to its account by the hands of that man of Belial? Cannot he entreat him—can he not make peace, and save his young life? He is but a stripling and that man, like Goliath of old, a man of war from his youth up."

"And my master," said Martin Lightfoot, proudly, "is like young David,—one that can face a giant and kill him; for he has slain, like David, his lion and his bear ere now. At least he is one that will neither make peace nor entreat the face of living man. So shrive him quickly, Master Priest, and let him be gone to his work."

Poor Martin Lightfoot spoke thus bravely only to keep up his spirits and his young lord's; for, in spite of his confidence in Hereward's prowess, he had given him up for a lost man: and the tears ran down his rugged cheeks, as the old priest, rising up and seizing Hereward's two hands in his, besought him, with the passionate and graceful eloquence of his race, to have mercy upon his own youth.

Hereward understood his meaning, though not his words.

"Tell him," he said to Martin, "that fight I must,

and tell him that shrive me he must, and that quickly. Tell him how the fellow met me in the wood below just now, and would have slain me there, unarmed as I was; and how, when I told him it was a shame to strike a naked man, he told me he would give me but one hour's grace to go back, on the faith of a gentleman, for my armor and weapons, and meet him there again, to die by his hand. So shrive me quick, Sir Priest."

Hereward knelt down. Martin Lightfoot knelt down by him, and with a trembling voice began to interpret for him.

"What does he say?" asked Hereward, as the priest murmured something to himself.

"He said," quoth Martin, now fairly blubbering, "that, fair and young as you are, your shrift should be as short and as clean as David's."

Hereward was touched. "Anything but that," said he, smiting on his breast, "Mea culpa,—mea culpa,—mea maxima culpa.

"Tell him how I robbed my father."

The priest groaned as Martin did so.

"And how I mocked at my mother, and left her in a rage, without ever a kind word between us. And how I have slain I know not how many men in battle, though that, I trust, need not lay heavily on my soul, seeing that I killed them all in fair fight."

Again the priest groaned.

"And how I robbed a certain priest of his money, and gave it away to my housecarles."

Here the priest groaned more bitterly still.

"O my son! my son! where hast thou found time to lay all these burdens on thy young soul?"

"It will take less time," said Martin, bluntly, "for you to take the burdens off again."

"But I dare not absolve him for robbing a priest. Heaven help him! He must go to the bishop for that. He is more fit to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem than to battle."

"He has no time," quoth Martin, "for bishops or Jerusalem."

"Tell him," says Hereward, "that in this purse is all I have, that in it he will find sixty silver pennies, besides two strange coins of gold."

"Sir priest," said Martin Lightfoot taking the purse from Hereward, and keeping it in his own hand, "there are in this bag moneys."

Martin had no mind to let the priest into the secret of the state of their finances.

"And tell him," continued Hereward, "that if I fall in this battle I give him all that money, that he may part it among the poor for the good of my soul."

"Pish!" said Martin to his lord; "that is paying him for having you killed. You should pay him for keeping you alive." And without waiting for the answer, he spoke in Latin,—

"And if he comes back safe from this battle, he will give you ten pennies for yourself and your church, Priest, and therefore expects you to pray your very loudest while he is gone."

"I will pray, I will pray," said the holy man; "I will wrestle in prayer. Ah that he could slay the wicked, and reward the proud according to his deservings! Ah that he could rid me and my master and my young lady, of this son of Belial,—this devourer of widows and orphans,—this slayer of the poor and needy, who fills this place with innocent blood,—him of whom it is written, 'They stretch forth their mouth unto the heaven, and their tongue goeth through the world. Therefore fall the people unto them, and thereout suck they no small advantage.' I will shrive him, shrive him of all save robbing the priest, and for that he must go to the bishop, if he live, and if not, the Lord have mercy on your soul."

And so, weeping and trembling, the good old man pronounced the words of absolution.

Hereward rose, thanked him, and then hurried out in silence.

"You will pray your very loudest, Priest," said Martin, as he followed his young lord.

"I will, I will," quoth he, and kneeling down began to chant that noble seventy-third Psalm, "Quam bonus Israel," which he had just so fitly quoted.

"Thou gavest him the bag, Martin?" said Hereward, as they hurried on.

"You are not dead yet. 'No play, no pay,' is as good a rule for priest as for layman."

"Now then, Martin Lightfoot, good-by. Come not with me. It must never be said, even slanderously, that I brought two into the field against one; and if I die, Martin—"

"You won't die!" said Lightfoot, shutting his teeth.

"If I die, go back to my people, somehow, and tell them that I died like a true earl's son."

Hereward held out his hand; Martin fell on his knees and kissed it; watched him with set teeth till he disappeared in the wood; and then started forward and entered the bushes at a different spot.

"I must be nigh at hand to see fair play," he muttered to himself, "in case any of his ruffians be hanging about. Fair play I'll see, and fair play I'll give, too, for the sake of my lord's honor, though I be bitterly loath to do it. So many times as I have been a villain when it was of no use, why mayn't I be one now, when it would serve the purpose indeed. Why did we ever come into this accursed place? But one thing I will do," said he, as he ensconced himself under a thick holly, whence he could see the meeting of the combatants upon an open lawn some twenty yards away: "If that big bull-calf kills my master, and I do not jump on his back and pick his

brains out with this trusty steel of mine, may my right arm—"

And Martin Lightfoot swore a fearful oath, which need not here be written.

The priest had just finished his chant of the seventy-third Psalm, and he had betaken himself in his spiritual warfare, as it was then called, to the equally apposite fifty-second, "Quid gloriaris?"

"Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant, that thou canst do mischief, whereas the goodness of God endureth yet daily?"

"Father! father!" cried a soft voice in the doorway, "where are you?"

And in hurried the Princess.

"Hide this," she said, breathless, drawing from beneath her mantel a huge sword; "hide it, where no one dare touch it, under the altar behind the holy rood; no place too secret."

"What is it?" asked the priest, springing up from his knees.

"His sword,—the Ogre's,—his magic sword, which kills whomsoever it strikes. I coaxed the wretch to let me have it last night when he was tipsy, for fear he should quarrel with the young stranger; and I have kept it from him ever since by one excuse or another; and now he has sent one of his ruffians in for it, saying that if I do not give it up at once he will come back and kill me."

"He dare not do that," said the priest.

"What is there that he dare not?" said she. "Hide it at once; I know that he wants it to fight with this Hereward."

"If he wants it for that," said the priest, "it is too late; for half an hour is passed since Hereward went to meet him."

"And you let him go? You did not persuade him, stop him? You let him go hence to his death?"

In vain the good man expostulated and explained that it was no fault of his.

"You must come with me this instant to my father,—to them; they must be parted. They shall be parted. If you dare not, I dare. I will throw myself between them, and he that strikes the other shall strike me."

And she hurried the priest out of the house, down the knoll, and across the yard. There they found others on the same errand. The news that a battle was toward had soon spread, and the men-at-arms were hurrying down to the fight; kept back, however, by Alef, who strode along at their head.

Alef was sorely perplexed in mind. He had taken, as all honest men did, a great liking to Hereward. Moreover, he was his kinsman and his guest. Save him he would if he could, but how to save him without mortally offending his tyrant Ironhook he could not see. At least he would exert what little

power he had, and prevent, if possible, his men-at-arms from helping their darling leader against the hapless lad.

Alet's perplexity was much increased when his daughter bounded toward him, seizing him by the arm, and hurried him on, showing by look and word which of the combatants she favored, so plainly that the ruffians behind broke into scornful murmurs. They burst through the bushes. Martin Lightfoot, happily, heard them coming, and had just time to slip away noiselessly, like a rabbit, to the other part of the cover.

The combat seemed at the first glance to be one between a grown man and a child, so unequal was the size of the combatants. But the second look showed that the advantage was by no means with iron-hook. Stumbling to and fro with the broken shaft of a javelin sticking in his thigh, he vainly tried to seize and crush Hereward in his enormous arms. Hereward, bleeding, but still active and upright, broke away, and sprang round him, watching for an opportunity to strike a deadly blow. The housecarles rushed forward with yells. Alef shouted to the combatants to desist; but ere the party could reach them, Hereward's opportunity had come. Ironhook, after a fruitless lunge, stumbled forward. Hereward leaped aside, and spying an unguarded spot below the corslet, drove his sword deep into the

giant's body, and rolled him over upon the sward. Then arose shouts of fury.

"Foul play!" cried one.

And others taking up the cry, called out, "Sorcery!" and "Treason!"

Hereward stood over Ironhook as he lay writhing and foaming on the ground.

"Killed by a boy at last!" groaned he. "If I had but had my own sword,—my Brain-biter which that witch stole from me but last night!" and amid foul curses and bitter tears of shame his mortal spirit fled to its doom.

The housecarles rushed in on Hereward, who had enough to do to keep them at arm's length by long sweeps of his sword.

Alef entreated, threatened, promised a fair trial if the men would give fair play; when, to complete the confusion, the Princess threw herself upon the corpse, shrieking and tearing her hair; and to Hereward's surprise and disgust, bewailed the prowess and the virtues of the dead, calling upon all present to avenge his murder.

Hereward vowed inwardly that he would never again trust woman's fancy or fight in woman's quarrel. He was now nigh at his wit's end; the housecarles had closed round him in a ring with the intention of seizing him; and however well he might defend his front, he might be crippled at any moment from behind:

but in the very nick of time Martin Lightfoot burst through the crowd, set himself heel to heel with his master, and broke out not with threats, but with a good-humored laugh.

"Here is a pretty coil about a red-headed brute of a Pict! Danes, Ostmen!' he cried, "are you not ashamed to call such a fellow your lord, when you have such a true earl's son as this to lead you if you will?"

The Ostmen in the company looked at each other. Martain Lightfoot saw that his appeal to the antipathies of race had told, and followed it up by a string of witticisms upon the Pictish nation in general, of which the only two fit for modern ears to be set down were the two old stories, that the Picts had feet so large that they used to lie upon their backs and hold up their legs to shelter them from the sun; and that when killed, they could not fall down, but died as they were, all standing.

"So that the only foul play I can see is, that my master shoved the fellow over after he had stabbed him, instead of leaving him to stand upright there, like one of your Cornish Dolemens, till his flesh should fall off his bones."

Hereward saw the effect of Martin's words, and burst out in Danish likewise.

"Look at me!" he said; "I am Hereward the outlaw, I am the champion, I am the Berserker, I

am the Viking, I am the land thief, the sea thief, the ravager of the world, the bear-slayer, the ogre-killer, the raven-fattener, the darling of the wolf, the curse of the widow. Touch me, and I will give you to the raven and to the wolf, as I have this ogre. Be my men, and follow me over the swan's road, over the whale's path, over the snake's leap, to the land where the sea meets the sun, and golden apples hang on every tree; and we will freight our ships with Moorish maidens, and the gold of Cadiz and Algiers."

"Hark to the Viking! Hark to the right earl's son!" shouted some of the Danes, whose blood had been stirred many a time before by such wild words, and on whom Hereward's youth and beauty had their due effect. And now the counsels of the ruffians being divided, the old priest gained courage to step in. Let them deliver Hereward and his serving man into his custody. He would bring them forth on the morrow, and there should be full investigation and fair trial. And so Hereward and Martin, who both stoutly refused to give up their arms, were marched back into the town, locked in the little church, and left to their meditations.

Hereward sat down on the pavement and cursed the Princess. Martin Lightfoot took off his master's corselets, and, as well as the darkness would allow, bound up his wounds, which happily were not severe.

"Were I you," said he at last, "I should keep my curses until I saw the end of this adventure."

"Has not the girl betrayed me shamefully?"

"Not she. I saw her warn you, as far as looks could do, not to quarrel with the man."

"That was because she did not know me. Little she thought that I could—"

"Don't halloo till you are out of the wood. This is a night for praying rather than boasting."

"She cannot really love that wretch," said Hereward, after a pause. "You saw how she mocked him."

"Women are strange things, and often tease most where they love most."

"But such a misbegotten savage."

"Women are strange things, say I, and with some a big fellow is a pretty fellow, be he uglier than seven Ironhooks. Still because women are strange things, have patience, say I."

The lock creaked, and the old priest came in. Martin leaped to the open door; but it was slammed in his face by men outside with scornful laughter.

The priest took Hereward's head in his hands, wept over him, blessed him for having slain Goliath like young David, and then set food and drink before the two; but he answered Martin's questions only with sighs and shakings of the head.

"Let us eat and drink then," said Martin, "and after that you, my lord, sleep off your wounds while I watch the door. I have no fancy for these fellows taking us unawares at night."

Martin lay quietly across the door till the small hours, listening to every sound, till the key creaked once more in the lock. He started at the sound, and seizing the person who entered round the neck, whispered, "One word, and you are dead."

"Do not hurt me," half shrieked a stifled voice; and Martin Lightfoot, to his surprise, found that he had grasped no armed man, but the slight frame of a young girl.

"I am the Princess," she observed; "let me in."

"A very pretty hostage for us," thought Martin, and letting her go seized the key, locking the door in the inside.

"Take me to your master," she cried and Martin led her up to the couch wondering, but half suspecting some further trap.

"You have a dagger in your hand," said he, holding her wrist.

"I have. If I had meant to use it, it would have been used first on you. Take it, if you like."

She hurried up to Hereward, who lay sleeping quietly on the altar-steps; knelt by him, wrung his hands, called him her champion, her deliverer.

"I am not well awake yet," said he, coldly, "and

don't know whether this may not be a dream, as more that I have seen and heard seems to be."

"It is no dream. I am true. I was always true to you. Have I not put myself in your power? Am I not come here to deliver you, my deliverer?"

"The tears which you shed over your ogre's corpse seem to have dried quickly enough."

"Cruel! What else could I do? You heard him accuse me to those ruffians of having stolen his sword. My life, my father's life, were not safe a moment, had I not dissembled, and done the thing I loathed. Ah!" she went on, bitterly, "you men, who rule the world and us by cruel steel, you forget that we poor women have but one weapon left wherewith to hold our own, and that is cunning, and are driven by you day after day to tell the lie which we detest."

"Then you really stole his sword?"

"And hid it here, for your sake!" and she drew the weapon from behind the altar.

"Take it. It is yours now. It is magical. Whoever smites with it, need never smite again. Now, quick, you must be gone. But promise one thing before you go."

"If I leave this land safe, I will do it, be it what it may. Why not come with me, lady and see it done?"

She laughed. "Vain boy, do you think that I love you well enough for that?"

"I have won you, and why should I not keep you?" said Hereward sullenly.

"Do you not know that I am betrothed to your kinsman? And—though that you cannot know—that I love your kinsman?"

"So I have all the blows, and none of the spoil."

"Tush! you have the glory,—and the sword,—and the chance, if you will do my bidding, of being called by all ladies a true and gentle knight, who cared not for his own pleasure, but for deeds of chivalry. Go to my betrothed,—to Waterford over the sea. Take him this ring, and tell him by that token to come and claim me soon, lest he run the danger of losing me a second time, and lose me then forever; for I am in hard case here and were it not for my father's sake, perhaps I might be weak enough, in spite of what men might say, to flee with you to your kinsman across the sea."

"Trust me and come," said Hereward, whose young blood kindled with a sudden nobleness, "trust me, and I will treat you like my sister, like my queen. By the holy rood above I will swear to be true to you."

"I do trust you, but it cannot be. Here is money for you in plenty to hire a passage if you need; it is no shame to take it from me. And now one thing more. Here is a cord,—you must bind the hands and feet of the old priest inside, and then you must bind mine likewise."

"Never," quoth Hereward.

"It must be. How else can I explain your having got the key? I made them give me the key on the pretence that with one who had most cause to hate you, it would be safe; and when they come and find us in the morning I shall tell them how I came here to stab you with my own hands,—you must lay the dagger by me,—and how you and your man fell upon us, and bound us, and you escaped. "Ah! Mary Mother," continued the maiden with a sigh, "when shall we poor weak women have no more need of lying?"

She lay down, and Hereward, in spite of himself, gently bound her hands and feet, kissing them as he bound them.

"I shall do well here upon the altar steps," said she. "How can I spend my time better till the morning light than to lie here and pray?"

The old priest, who was plainly in the plot, submitted meekly to the same fate; and Hereward and Martin Lightfoot stole out, locking the door, but leaving the key in it outside. To scramble over the old earthwork was an easy matter; and, in a few minutes they were hurrying down the valley to the sea, with a fresh breeze blowing behind them from the north.

"Did I not tell you, my lord," said Martin Lightfoot, "to keep your curses till you had seen the end of this adventure?"

Hereward was silent. His brain was still whirling from the adventures of the day, and his heart was very deeply touched. His shrift of the morning, hurried and formal as it had been, had softened him. His danger—for he felt how he had been face to face with death—had softened him likewise; and he repented somewhat of his vainglorious and bloodthirsty boasting over a fallen foe, as he began to see that there was a purpose more noble in life than ranging land and sea, a ruffian among ruffians, seeking for glory amid blood and flame. The idea of chivalry, of succoring the weak and the oppressed, of keeping faith and honor not merely towards men who could avenge themselves, but towards women who could not; the dim dawn of purity, gentleness, and the conquest of his own fierce passions,—all these had taken root in his heart during his adventure with the fair Cornish girl. The seed was sown. Would it be cut down again by the bitter blast of the rough fighting world, or would it grow and bear the noble fruit of "gentle, very perfect knighthood?"

They reached the ship, clambered on board without ceremony, at the risk of being taken and killed as robbers, and told their case. The merchants had not completed their cargo of tin. Hereward offered to make up their loss to them if they would set sail at once; and they, feeling that the place would be for some time to come too hot to hold them, and being

in high delight, like honest Ostmen, with Hereward's prowess, agreed to sail straight for Waterford, and complete their cargo there. But the tide was out. It was three full hours before the ship could float; and for three full hours they waited in fear and trembling, expecting the Cornishmen to be down upon them in a body every moment, under which wholesome fear some on board prayed fervently who had never been known to pray before.

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HOW HEREWARD SUCCORED THE PRINCESS OF CORNWALL A SECOND TIME.

FAT was the feasting and loud was the harping in the halls of Alef the Cornishman, King of Gweek. Savory was the smell of fried pilchard and hake; more savory still that of roast porpoise; most savory of all that of fifty huge squab pies, built up of layers of apples, bacon, onions, and mutton, and at the bottom of each a squab, or young cormorant, which diffused both through the pie and through the ambient air a delicate odor of mingled guano and polecat. And the occasion was worthy alike of the smell and of the noise; for King Alef, finding that after the Ogre's death the neighboring kings were

but too ready to make reprisals on him for his champion's murders and robberies, had made a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, with Hannibal the son of Gryll, King of Marazion, and had confirmed the same by bestowing on him the hand of his fair daughter. Whether she approved of the match or not, was asked neither by King Alef nor by King Hannibal.

To-night was the bridal-feast. To-morrow morning the church was to hallow the union, and after that Hannibal Gryll was to lead home his bride, among a gallant company.

And as they ate and drank, and harped and piped, there came into the hall four shabbily dressed men, —one of them a short, broad fellow, with black elf-locks and a red beard,—and sat them down sneakingly at the lowest end of all the benches.

In hospitable Cornwall, especially on such a day, every guest was welcome; and the strangers sat peaceably, but ate nothing, though there was both hake and pilchard within reach.

Next to them, by chance, sat a great lourdan of a Dane, as honest, brave, and stupid a fellow as ever tugged at oar; and after a while they fell talking, till the strangers had heard the reason of this great feast, and all the news of the country side.

"But whence did they come, not to know it already; for all Cornwall was talking thereof?"

"O, they came out of Devonshire, seeking service down west, with some merchant or rover, being seafaring men."

The stranger with the black hair had been, meanwhile, earnestly watching the Princess, who sat at the board's head. He saw her watching him in return, and with a face sad enough.

At last she burst into tears.

"What should the bride weep for, at such a merry wedding?" asked he of his companions.

"O, cause enough;" and he told bluntly enough the Princess's story. "And what is more," said he, "the King of Waterford sent a ship over last week, with forty proper lads on board, and two gallant holders with them, to demand her; but for all answer, they were put into the strong house, and there they lie, chained to a log, at this minute. Pity it is and shame, I hold, for I am a Dane myself; and pity, too, that such a bonny lass should go to an unkempt Welshman like this, instead of a tight smart Viking's son, like the Waterford lad."

The stranger answered nothing, but kept his eyes upon the Princess, till she looked at him steadfastly in return.

She turned pale and red again; but after a while she spoke.

"There is a stranger there; and what his rank may be I know not; but he has been thrust down to

the lowest seat, in a house that used to honor strangers, instead of treating them like slaves. Let him take this dish from my hand, and eat joyfully, lest when he goes home he may speak scorn of bridegroom and bride, and our Cornish weddings."

The servant brought the dish down; he gave a look at the stranger's shabby dress, turned up his nose, and pretending to mistake, put the dish into the hand of the Dane.

"Hold, lads," quoth the stranger. "If I have ears, that was meant for me."

He seized the platter with both hands; and therewith the hands both of the Cornishman and of the Dane. There was a struggle; but so bitter was the stranger's grip, that (says the chronicler) the blood burst from the nails of both his opponents.

He was called a "savage," a "devil in man's shape," and other dainty names; but he was left to eat his squab pie in peace.

"Patience, lads," quoth he, as he filled his mouth. "Before I take my pleasure at this wedding, I will hand my own dish round as well as any of you."

Whereat men wondered, but held their tongues.

And when the eating was over and the drinking began, the Princess rose, and came round to drink the farewell health.

With her maids behind her, and her harper before her (so was the Cornish custom), she pledged one by

one each of the guests, slave as well as free, while the harper played a tune.

She came down at last to the strangers. Her face was pale, and her eyes red with weeping.

She filled a cup of wine, and one of her maids offered it to the stranger.

He put it back, courteously, but firmly. "Not from your hand," said he.

A growl about his bad manners arose straightway, and the minstrel, who (as often happened in those days) was jester likewise, made merry at his expense, and advised the company to turn the wild beast out of the hall.

"Silence, fools!" said the Princess. "Why should he know our west-country ways? He may take it from my hand, if not from hers."

And she held out the cup to him herself.

He took it, looking her steadily in the face; and it seemed to the minstrel as if their hands lingered together round the cup-handle, and that he saw the glitter of a ring.

Like many another of his craft before and since, he was a vain, meddlesome vagabond, and must needs pry into a secret which certainly did not concern him.

So he could not leave the stranger in peace; and knowing that his privileged calling protected him from that formidable fist, he never passed him by

without a sneer or a jest, as he wandered round the table, offering his harp, in the Cornish fashion, to any one who wished to play and sing.

"But not to you, Sir Elf-locks; he that is rude to a pretty girl when she offers him wine, is too great a boor to understand my trade."

"It is a fool's trick," answered the stranger at last, "to put off what you must do at last. If I had but the time, I would pay you for your tune with a better one than you ever heard."

"Take the harp, then, boor!" said the minstrel, with a laugh and a jest.

The stranger took it, and drew from it such music as made all heads turn toward him at once. Then he began to sing, sometimes by himself, and sometimes his comrades, "*more Girviorum tripliciter canentes*," joined their voices in a three-man-glee.

In vain the minstrel, jealous for his own credit, tried to snatch the harp away. The stranger sang on, till all hearts were softened; and the Princess, taking the rich shawl from her shoulders, threw it over those of the stranger, saying that it was a gift too poor for such a scald.

"Scald!" roared the bridegroom (now well in his cups) from the head of the table; "ask what thou wilt, short of my bride and my kingdom, and it is thine."

"Give me, then, Hannibal Grylls, King of Mara-

zion, the Danes who came from Ranald, of Waterford."

"You shall have them! Pity that you have asked for nothing better than such tarry ruffians!"

A few minutes after, the minstrel, bursting with jealousy and rage, was whispering in Hannibal's ear.

The hot old Punic * blood flashed up in his cheeks, and his thin Punic lips curved into a snaky smile. Perhaps the old Punic treachery in his heart; for all that he was heard to reply was, "We must not disturb the good-fellowship of a Cornish wedding."

The stranger, nevertheless, and the Princess likewise, had seen that bitter smile.

Men drank hard and long that night; and when daylight came, the strangers were gone.

In the morning the marriage ceremony was performed; and then began the pageant of leading home the bride. The minstrels went first, harping and piping; then King Hannibal, carrying his bride behind him on a pillion; and after them a string of servants and men-at-arms, leading country ponies, laden with the bride's dower. Along with them, unarmed, sulky, and suspicious, walked the forty

* Hannibal, still a common name in Cornwall, is held—and not unlikely—to have been introduced there by the ancient Phœnician colonists.

Danes, who were informed that they should go to Marazion, and there be shipped off for Ireland.

Now, as all men know, those parts of Cornwall, flat and open furze-downs aloft, are cut, for many miles inland, by long branches of tide river, walled in by woods and rocks, which rivers join at last in the great basin of Falmouth harbor; and by crossing one or more of these, the bridal party would save many a mile on their road towards the west.

So they had timed the journey by the tides; lest, finding low water in the rivers, they should have to wade to the ferry-boats waist-deep in mud; and going down the deep hill-side, through oak and ash and hazel copse, they entered, as many as could, a great flat-bottomed barge, and were rowed across some quarter of a mile, to land under a jutting crag, and go up again by a similar path into the woods.

So the first boat-load went up, the minstrels in front, harping and piping till the greenwood rang, King Hannibal next, with his bride, and behind him spearsmen and axemen, with a Dane between every two.

When they had risen some two hundred feet, and were in the heart of the forest, Hannibal turned, and made a sign to the men behind him.

Then each pair of them seized the Dane between them, and began to bind his hands behind his back.

"What will you do with us?"

"Send you back to Ireland,—a king never breaks his word,—but pick out your right eyes first, to show your master how much I care for him. Lucky for you that I leave you an eye apiece, to find your friend the harper, whom if I catch, I flay alive."

"You promised!" cried the Princess.

"And so did you, traitress!" and he gripped her arm, which was round his waist, till she screamed. "So did you promise: but not to me. And you shall pass your bridal night in my dog-kennel, after my dog-whip has taught you not to give rings again to wandering harpers."

The wretched Princess shuddered; for she knew too well that such an atrocity was easy and common enough. She knew it well. Why should she not? The story of the Cid's daughters and the Knights of Carrion; the far more authentic one of Robert of Belesme; and many another ugly tale of the early middle age, will prove but too certainly that, before the days of chivalry began, neither youth, beauty, nor the sacred ties of matrimony, could protect women from the most horrible outrages, at the hands of those who should have been their protectors. It was reserved for monks and inquisitors, in the name of religion and the Gospel, to continue, through after centuries, those brutalities toward women of which gentlemen and knights had grown ashamed, save when (as in the case of the Albigense crusaders)

monks and inquisitors bade them torture, mutilate, and burn, in the name of Him who died on the cross.

But the words had hardly passed the lips of Hannibal, ere he reeled in the saddle, and fell to the ground, a javelin through his heart.

A strong arm caught the Princess. A voice which she knew bade her have no fear.

"Bind your horse to a tree, for we shall want him, and wait!"

Three well-armed men rushed on the nearest Cornishmen, and hewed them down. A fourth unbound the Dane, and bade him catch up a weapon, and fight for his life.

A second pair were dispatched, a second Dane freed, ere a minute was over; the Cornishmen, struggling up the narrow path toward the shouts above, were overpowered in detail by continually increasing numbers; and ere half an hour was over, the whole party were freed, mounted on the ponies, and making their way over the downs toward the west.

"Noble, noble Hereward!" said the Princess, as she sat behind him on Hannibal's horse. "I knew you from the first moment; and my nurse knew you too. Is she here? Is she safe?"

"I have taken care of that. She has done us too good service to be left here, and be hanged."

"I knew you, in spite of your hair, by your eyes."

"Yes," said Hereward. "It is not every man who carries one gray eye and one blue. The more difficult for me to go mumming when I need."

"But how came you hither, of all places in the world?"

"When you sent your nurse to me last night, to warn me that treason was abroad, it was easy for me to ask your road to Marazion; and easier too, when I found that you would go home the very way we came, to know that I must make my stand here or nowhere,"

"The way you came? Then where are you going now?"

"Beyond Marazion, to a little cove,—I cannot tell its name. There lies Sigtryg, your betrothed, and three good ships of war."

"There? Why did he not come for me himself?"

"Why? Because he knew nothing of what was toward. We meant to have sailed straight up your river to your father's town, and taken you out with a high hand. We had sworn with an oath,—which, as you saw I kept,—neither to eat nor drink in your house, save out of your own hands. But the easterly winds would not let us round the Lizard; so we put into that cove, and there I and these two lads, my nephews, offered to go forward as spies, while Sigtryg threw up an earthwork, and made a stand against the Cornish. We meant merely to go back to him,

and give him news. But when I found you as good as wedded, I had to do what I could while I could; and I have done it."

"You have, my noble and true champion," said she, kissing him.

"Humph!" quoth Hereward, laughing. "Do not tempt me by being too grateful, it is hard enough to gather honey, like the bees, for other folks to eat. What if I kept you myself, now that I have got you?"

"Hereward!"

"O, there is no fear, pretty lady. I have other things to think of than making love to you,—and one is, how we are to get to our ships, and moreover, past Marazion town."

And hard work they had to get thither. The country was soon roused and up in arms; and it was only by wandering a three days' circuit through bogs and moors, till the ponies were utterly tired out, and left behind (the bulkier part of the dowry being left behind with them), that they made their appearance on the shore of Mount's Bay, Hereward leading the Princess in triumph upon Hannibal's horse.

After which they all sailed away for Ireland, and there, like young Beichan,—

> "Prepared another wedding,
> With all their hearts so full of glee."

POEMS.

POEMS.

THE SANDS OF DEE.

"O MARY, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee;"
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land;
And never home came she.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drowned maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee."

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee.

MARGARET TO DOLCINO.

ASK if I love thee? Oh, smiles cannot tell
Plainer what tears are now showing too well.
Had I not loved thee, my sky had been clear:
Had I not loved thee, I had not been here,
Weeping by thee.

Ask if I love thee? How else could I borrow
Pride from man's slander, and strength from my sorrow?
Laugh when they sneer at the fanatic's bride,
Knowing no bliss, save to toil and abide
Weeping by thee.

DOLCINO TO MARGARET.

THE world goes up and the world goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain;
And yesterday's sneer and yesterday's frown
Can never come over again,
Sweet wife:
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm though man be cold,
  And the night will hallow the day;
Till the heart which at even was weary and old
  Can rise in the morning gay,
    Sweet wife;
  To its work in the morning gay.

A LAMENT.

THE merry merry lark was up and singing,
  And the hare was out and feeding on the lea;
And the merry merry bells below were ringing,
  When my child's laugh rang through me.

Now the hare is snared and dead beside the snow-yard,
  And the lark beside the dreary winter sea;
And the baby in his cradle in the churchyard
  Sleeps sound till the bell brings me.

YOUNG AND OLD.

WHEN all the world is young, lad,
  And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
  And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
  And round the world away;

Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down;
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among;
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young.

THE SUMMER SEA.

SOFT soft wind, from out the sweet south sliding,
Waft thy silver cloud webs athwart the summer sea;
Thin thin threads of mist on dewy fingers twining
Weave a veil of dappled gauze to shade my babe and me.

Deep deep Love, within thine own abyss abiding,
Pour Thyself abroad, O Lord, on earth and air and sea;
Worn weary hearts within Thy holy temple hiding,
Shield from sorrow, sin, and shame my helpless babe and me.

SONNET.

THE baby sings not on its mother's breast;
Nor nightingales who nestle side by side;
Nor I by thine: but let us only part,
Then lips which should but kiss, and so be still,
As having uttered all, must speak again—
Oh stunted thoughts! Oh chill and fettered rhyme!
Yet my great bliss, though still entirely blest,
Losing its proper home, can find no rest:
So, like a child who wiles away the time
With dance and carol till the eventide,
Watching its mother homeward through the glen;
Or nightingale, who, sitting far apart,
Tells to his listening mate within the nest
The wonder of his star-entrancèd heart
Till all the wakened woodlands laugh and thrill—
Forth all my being bubbles into song;
And rings aloft, not smooth, yet clear and strong.

A HOPE.

TWIN stars, aloft in ether clear,
Around each other roll alway,
Within one common atmosphere
Of their own mutual light and day.

And myriad happy eyes are bent
Upon their changeless love alway

As, strengthened by their one intent,
They pour the flood of life and day.

So we through this world's waning night
May, hand in hand, pursue our way;
Shed round us order, love, and light,
And shine unto the perfect day.

1842.

DRIFTING AWAY.

A FRAGMENT.

THEY drift away. Ah, God! they drift forever,
I watch the stream sweep onward to the sea,
Like some old battered buoy upon a roaring river,
Round whom the tide-waifs hang—then drft to sea.

I watch them drift—the old familiar faces,
Who fished and rode with me, by stream and wold,
Till ghosts, not men, fill old beloved places,
And, ah! the land is rank with churchyard mould.

I watch them drift—the youthful aspirations,
Shores, landmarks, beacons, drift alike.

. . . . . .

I watch them drift—the poets and the statesmen;
The very streams run upward from the sea.

. . . . . .

Yet over head the boundless arch of heaven
Still fades to night, still blazes into day.

. . . . . .

Ah, God! My God! Thou wilt not drift away.

DARTSIDE.

I CANNOT tell what you say, green leaves,
I cannot tell what you say:
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
And a word in you this day.

I cannot tell what you say, rosy rocks,
I cannot tell what you say:
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
And a word in you this day.

I cannot tell what you say, brown streams,
I cannot tell what you say:
But I know that in you too a spirit doth live,
And a word doth speak this day.

"Oh green is the color of faith and truth,
And rose the color of love and youth,
And brown of the fruitful clay.
Sweet Earth is faithful, and fruitful, and young,
And her bridal day shall come ere long,
And you shall know what the rocks and the streams
And the whispering woodlands say."

A FAREWELL.

MY fairest child, I have no song to give you;
No lark could pipe in skies so dull and gray;
Yet, if you will, one quiet hint I'll leave you,
For every day.

I'll tell you how to sing a clearer carol
Than lark who hails the dawn or breezy down;
To earn yourself a purer poet's laurel
Than Shakespeare's crown.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who can be clever;
Do lovely things, not dream them, all day long;
And so make Life, and Death, and that Forever,
One grand sweet song.

VALENTINE'S DAY.

OH! I wish I were a tiny browny bird from out the south,
Settled among the alder-holts, and twittering by the stream,
I would put my tiny tail down, and put up my tiny mouth,
And sing my tiny life away in one melodious dream.

II.

I would sing about the blossoms, and the sunshine and the sky,
And the tiny wife I mean to have in such a cozy nest,

And if some one came and shot me dead, why then
I could but die,
With my tiny life and tiny song just ended at their
best.

TO G. A. G.

A HASTY jest I once let fall—
As jests are wont to be, untrue—
As if the sum of joy to you,
Were hunt and picnic, rout and ball.

Your eyes met mine: I did not blame;
You saw it: but I touched too near
Some noble nerve; a silent tear
Spoke soft reproach, and lofty shame.

I do not wish those words unsaid.
Unspoilt by praise and pleasure, you
In that one look to woman grew,
While with a child, I thought, I played.

Next to mine own beloved so long!
I have not spent my heart in vain.
I watch the blade; I see the grain;
A woman's soul, most soft, yet strong.

THE THREE FISHERS.

THREE fishers went sailing away to the West,
Away to the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbor bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown.
But men must work, and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbor bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
For those who will never come home to the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep;
And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

IT chanced upon the merry, merry Christmas eve,
I went sighing past the church across the moorland dreary—
"Oh! never sin and want and woe this earth will leave,
And the bells but mock the wailing round, they sing as cheery.

"How long, O Lord! how long before Thou come again!
Still in cellar, and in garret, and on moorland dreary
The orphans moan, and widows weep, and poor men toil in vain,
Till earth is sick of hope deferred, though Christmas bells be cheery."

Then arose a joyous clamor from the wild-fowl on the mere,
Beneath the stars, across the snow, like clear bells ringing,
And a voice within cried — "Listen! — Christmas carols even here!
Though thou be dumb, yet o'er their work the stars and snows are singing.

"Blind! I live, I love, I reign; and all the nations through,
With the thunder of my judgments even now are ringing,
Do thou fulfil thy work, but as you wild fowl do,
Thou wilt heed no less the wailing, yet hear through it angels singing."

THE DAY OF THE LORD.

THE Day of the Lord is at hand, at hand:
Its storms roll up the sky:
The nations sleep starving on heaps of gold;
All dreamers toss and sigh;
The night is darkest before the morn;
When the pain is sorest the child is born,
And the day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, angels of God—
Freedom, and Mercy, and Truth;
Come! for the earth is grown coward and old,
Come down, and renew us her youth.
Wisdom, Self-Sacrifice, Daring, and Love,
Haste to the battle-field, stoop from above,
To the Day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, hounds of hell—
Famine, and Plague, and War;

Idleness, Bigotry, Cant, and Misrule,
Gather and fall in the snare!
Hireling and Mammonite, Bigot and Knave,
Crawl to the battle-field, sneak to your grave,
In the Day of the Lord at hand.

Who would sit down and sigh for a lost age of gold,
While the Lord of all ages is here?
True hearts will leap up at the trumpet of God,
And those who can suffer, can dare.
Each old age of gold was an iron age too,
And the meekest of saints may find stern work to do,
In the day of the Lord at hand.

BALLAD.

LORRAINE, LORRAINE, LORRÈE.

I.

"ARE you ready for your steeple-chase, Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrèe!
Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Baree.
You're booked to ride your capping race to-day at Coulterlee,
You're booked to ride Vindictive, for all the world to see,
To keep him straight, and keep him first, and win the run for me.
Barum, Barum," etc.

2.

She clasped her new-born baby, poor Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrèe,
"I cannot ride Vindictive, as any man might see,
And I will not ride Vindictive, with this baby on my knee;
He's killed a boy, he's killed a man, and why must he kill me?"

3.

"Unless you ride Vindictive, Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrèe,
Unless you ride Vindictive to-day at Coulterlee,
And land him safe across the brook, and win the blank for me,
It's you may keep your baby, for you'll get no keep from me."

4.

"That husbands could be cruel," said Lorraine, Lor-Lorraine, Lorrèe,
"That husbands could be cruel, I have known for seasons three;
But oh! to ride Vindictive while a baby cries for me.
And be killed across a fence at last for all the world to see!"

5.

She mastered young Vindictive—Oh! the gallant lass was she,

And kept him straight and won the race as near as near could be;
But he killed her at the brook against a pollard willow tree,
Oh! he killed her at the brook, the brute, for all the world to see,
And no one but the baby cried for poor Lorraine, Lorrèe.

THE WATER BABIES.

THE WATER BABIES:

A FAIRY TALE FOR A LAND-BABY.

ONCE upon a time there was a little chimney-sweep, and his name was Tom. That is a short name, and you have heard it before, so you will not have much trouble in remembering it. He lived in a great town in the North country, where there were plenty of chimneys to sweep, and plenty of money for Tom to earn and his master to spend. He could not read nor write, and did not care to do either; and he never washed himself, for there was no water up the court where he lived. He had never been taught to say his prayers. He had never heard of God or of Christ, except in words which you never have heard, and which it would have been well if he had never heard. He cried half his time, and laughed the other half. He cried when he had to climb the dark flues, rubbing his poor knees and elbows raw; and when the soot got into his eyes,

which it did every day in the week; and when his master beat him, which he did every day in the week; and when he had not enough to eat, which happened every day in the week likewise. And he laughed the other half of the day, when he was tossing half-pennies with the other boys, or playing leap-frog over the posts, or bowling stones at the horses' legs as they trotted by; which last was excellent fun, when there was a wall at hand behind which to hide.

One day a smart little groom rode into the court where Tom lived. Tom was just hiding behind a wall, to heave half a brick at his horse's legs, as is the custom of that country when they welcome strangers; but the groom saw him, and halloed to him to know where Mr. Grimes, the chimney-sweep, lived. Now Mr. Grimes was Tom's own master, and Tom was a good man of business, and always civil to customers; so he put the half-brick down quietly behind the wall, and proceeded to take orders.

Mr. Grimes was to come up next morning to Sir John Harthover's, at the Place, for his old chimney-sweep was gone to prison, and the chimneys wanted sweeping. And so he rode away, not giving Tom time to ask what the sweep had gone to prison for, which was a matter of interest to Tom, as he had been in prison once or twice himself.

His master was so delighted at his new customer that he knocked Tom down out of hand, and drank

more beer that night than he usually did in two, in order to be sure of getting up in time next morning; for the more a man's head aches when he wakes, the more glad he is to turn out, and have a breath of fresh air. And, when he did get up at four the next morning, he knocked Tom down again, in order to teach him (as young gentlemen used to be taught at public schools) that he must be an extra good boy that day, as they were going to a very great house, and might make a very good thing of it, if they could but give satisfaction.

And Tom thought so likewise, and, indeed, would have done and behaved his best, even without being knocked down. For, of all places upon earth, Harthover Place (which he had never seen) was the most wonderful; and of all men on earth, Sir John (whom he had seen, having been sent to jail by him twice) was the most awful.

Now, I dare say, you never got up at three o'clock on a midsummer morning. Some people get up then because they want to catch salmon; and some, because they want to climb the Alps; and a great many more, because they must, like Tom. But, I assure you, that three o'clock on a mid-summer morning is the pleasantest time of all the twenty-four hours, and all the three hundred and sixty-five days; and why every one does not get up then, I never could tell, save that they are all determined to spoil their nerves

and their complexions by doing all night what they might just as well do all day.

So he and his master set out; Grimes rode the donkey in front, and Tom and the brushes walked behind; out of the court, and up the street, past the closed window-shutters, and the winking weary policeman, and the roofs all shining gray in the gray dawn.

They passed through the pitmen's village, all shut up and silent now; and through the turnpike; and then they were out in the real country, and plodding over the black dusty road, between black slag walls, with no sound but the groaning and thumping of the pit-engine in the next field. But soon the road grew white, and the walls likewise; and at the wall's foot grew long grass and gay flowers, all drenched with dew; and instead of the groaning of the pit-engine, they heard the skylark saying his matins high up in the air, and the pit-bird warbling in the sedges, as he had warbled all night long.

All else was silent. For old Mrs. Earth was still fast asleep; and, like many pretty people, she looked still prettier asleep than awake. The great elm-trees in the gold-green meadows were fast asleep above, and the cows fast asleep beneath them; nay, the few clouds which were about were fast asleep likewise, and so tired that they had lain down on the earth to rest, in long white flakes and bars, among the stems

of the elm-trees, and along the tops of the alders by the stream, waiting for the sun to bid them rise and go about their day's business in the clear, blue overhead.

On they went; and Tom looked and looked, for he never been so far into the country before; and longed to get over a gate and pick buttercups, and look for birds' nests in the hedge; but Mr. Grimes was a man of business, and would not have heard of that.

Soon they came up with a poor Irishwoman, trudging along with a bundle at her back. She had a gray shawl over her head, and crimson madder petticoat; so you may be sure she came from Galway. She had neither shoes nor stockings, and limped along as if she was tired and footsore: but she was a very tall handsome woman, with bright gray eyes, and heavy black hair hanging about her cheeks. And she took Mr. Grimes' fancy so much, that when he came alongside he called out to her:

"This is a hard road for a gradely foot like that. Will ye up, lass, and ride behind me?"

But, perhaps she did not admire Mr. Grimes's look and voice; for she answered quietly:

"No, thank you; I'd sooner walk with your little lad here."

"You may please yourself," growled Grimes, and went on, smoking.

So she walked beside Tom, and talked to him, and asked him where he lived, and what he knew, and all about himself, till Tom thought he had never met such a pleasant-spoken woman. And she asked him, at last, whether he said his prayers; and seemed sad when he told her that he knew no prayers to say.

Then he asked her where she lived; and she said far away by the sea. And Tom asked her about the sea; and she told him how it rolled and roared over the rocks in winter nights, and lay still in the bright summer days, for the children to bathe and play in it; and many a story more, till Tom longed to go and see the sea, and bathe in it likewise.

At last, at the bottom of a hill, they came to a spring: not such a spring as you see here, which soaks up out of a white gravel in the bog, among red fly-catchers, and pink bottle-heath, and sweet white orchis; nor such a one as you may see too here, which bubbles up under the warm sand-bank in the hollow lane, by the great tuft of lady-ferns, and makes the sand dance reels at the bottom, day and night, all the year round; not such a spring as either of those: but a real North country limestone fountain, like one of those in Sicily or Greece, where the old heathen fancied the nymphs sat cooling themselves the hot summer's day, while the shepherds peeped at them from behind the bushes. Out

of a low cave of rock, at the foot of a limestone crag, the great fountain rose, quelling and bubbling and gurgling, so clear that you could not tell where the water ended and the air began; and ran away under the road, a stream large enough to turn a mill; among blue geranium, and golden globe-flower, and wild raspberry, and the bird-cherry with its tassels of snow.

And there Grimes stopped and looked; and Tom looked too. Tom was wondering whether anything lived in that dark cave, and came out at night to fly in the meadows. But Grimes was not wondering at all. Without a word, he got off his donkey, and clambered over the low road-wall, and knelt down, and began dipping his ugly head into the spring; and very dirty he made it.

Tom was picking the flowers as fast as he could. The Irishwoman helped him, and showed him how to tie them up; and a very pretty nosegay they had made between them. But when he saw Grimes actually wash, he stopped, quite astonished; and when Grimes had finished, and began shaking his ears to dry them, he said:

"Why, master, I never saw you do that before."

"Nor will again, most likely. 'Twasn't for cleanliness I did it, but for coolness. I'd be ashamed to want washing every week or so, like any smutty collier-lad."

"I wish I might go and dip my head in," said poor little Tom. "It must be as good as putting it under the town-pump; and there is no beadle here to drive a chap away."

"Thou come along," said Grimes. "What dost want with washing thyself? Thou did not drink half a gallon of beer last night, like me."

"I don't care for you," said naughty Tom, and ran down to the stream, and began washing his face.

Grimes was very sulky, because the woman preferred Tom's company to his, so he dashed at him with horrid words, and tore him up from his knees, and began beating him. But Tom was accustomed to that, and got his head safe between Mr. Grimes's legs, and kicked his shins with all his might.

"Are you not ashamed of yourself, Thomas Grimes?" cried the Irishwoman over the wall.

Grimes looked up, startled at her knowing his name; but all he answered was, "No: nor never was yet," and went on beating Tom.

"Stop!" said the Irishwoman. "I have one more word for you both: for you will both see me again, before all is over. Those that wish to be clean, clean they will be; and those that wish to be foul, foul they will be. Remember."

And she turned away, and through a gate into the meadow. Grimes stood still a moment, like a man who had been stunned. Then he rushed after her,

shouting, "You come back!" But when he got into the meadow, the woman was not there.

Had she hidden away? There was no place to hide in. But Grimes looked about, and Tom also, for he was as puzzled as Grimes himself, at her disappearing so suddenly; but look where they would, she was not there.

Grimes came back again as silent as a post, for he was a little frightened; and getting on his donkey, filled a fresh pipe, and smoked away, leaving Tom in peace.

And now they had gone three miles and more, and came to Sir John's lodge-gates.

Very grand lodges they were, with very grand iron gates, and stone gate-posts, and on the top of each a most dreadful bogy, all teeth, horns and tail, which was the crest which Sir John's ancestors wore in the War of the Roses; and very prudent men they were to wear it, for all their enemies must have run for their lives at the very first sight of them.

But Tom and his master did not go in through the great iron gates, as if they had been Dukes or Bishops, but round the back way; and a very long way round it was; and into a little back door, where the ash-boy let them in, yawning horribly; and then in a passage the house-keeper met them, in such a flowered chintz dressing-gown, that Tom mistook her for My Lady herself, and she gave Grimes

solemn orders about "You will take care of this, and take care of that," as if he was going up the chimneys, and not Tom. And Grimes listened, and said every now and then, under his voice, "You'll mind that, you little beggar?" and Tom did mind, all at least that he could. And then the housekeeper turned them into a grand room, all covered up in sheets of brown paper, and bade them begin, in a lofty and tremendous voice; and so, after a whimper or two, and a kick from his master, into the grate Tom went, and up the chimney, while a housemaid stayed in the room to watch the furniture; to whom Mr. Grimes payed many playful and chivalrous compliments, but met with very slight encouragement in return.

How many chimneys he swept I cannot say: but he swept so many that he got quite tired, and puzzled too, for they were not like the town flues to which he was accustomed, but such as you would find—if you would only get up them and look, which perhaps you would not like to do—in old country houses, large and crooked chimneys, which had been altered again and again, till they ran one into another, anastomosing (as Professor Owen would say) considerably. So Tom fairly lost his way in them; not that he cared much for that, though he was in pitchy darkness, for he was as much at home in a chimney as a mole is under ground; but at last, com-

ing down as he thought the right chimney, he came down the wrong one, and found himself standing on the hearth-rug in a room the like of which he had never seen before.

Tom had never seen the like. He had never been in gentlefolks' rooms but when the carpets were all up, and the curtains down, and the furniture huddled together under a cloth, and the pictures covered with aprons and dusters; and he had often enough wondered what the rooms were like when they were all ready for the quality to sit in. And now he saw, and he thought the sight very pretty.

The room was all dressed in white: white window-curtains, white bed-curtains, white furniture, and white walls, with just a few lines of pink here and there. The carpet was all over gay little flowers; and the walls were hung with pictures in gilt frames, which amused Tom very much. There were pictures of ladies and gentlemen, and pictures of horses and dogs. The horses he liked; but the dogs he did not care for much, for there were no bulldogs among them, not even a terrier. But the two pictures which took his fancy most were: one, a man in long garments, with little children and their mothers round him, who was laying his hand upon the children's heads. That was a very pretty picture, Tom thought, to hang in a lady's room. For he could see that it was a lady's room by the dresses which lay about.

The other picture was that of a man nailed to a cross, which surprised Tom much. He fancied that he had seen something like it in a shop window. But why was it there? "Poor man," thought Tom; "and he looks so kind and quiet. But why should the lady have such a sad picture as that in her room? Perhaps it was some kinsman of hers, who had been murdered by the savages in foreign parts, and she kept it there for a remembrance." And Tom felt sad and awed, and turned to look at something else.

The next thing he saw, and that too puzzled him, was a washing-stand, with ewers and basins, and soap and brushes, and towels; and a large bath, full of clean water;—what a heap of things, all for washing! "She must be a very dirty lady," thought Tom, "by my master's rule, to want as much scrubbing as all that. But she must be very cunning to put the dirt out of the way so well afterwards, for I don't see a speck about the room, not even on the very towels."

And then, looking toward the bed, he saw the dirty lady, and held his breath with astonishment.

Under the snow-white coverlet, upon the snow-white pillow, lay the most beautiful little girl that Tom had ever seen. Her cheeks were almost as white as the pillow, and her hair was like threads of gold spread all about over the bed. She might have been as old as Tom, or maybe a year or two older; but Tom did not think of that. He thought only of

her delicate skin and golden hair, and wondered whether she were a real live person, or one of the wax dolls he had seen in the shops. But when he saw her breathe, he made up his mind that she was alive, and stood staring at her as if she had been an angel out of heaven.

No. She cannot be dirty. She never could have been dirty, thought Tom to himself. And then he thought, "And are all people like that when they are washed?" And he looked at his own wrist, and tried to rub the soot off, and wondered whether it ever would come off. "Certainly I should look much prettier then, if I grew at all like her."

And looking round, he suddenly saw, standing close to him, a little, ugly, black, ragged figure, with bleared eyes and grinning white teeth. He turned on it angrily. What did such a little black ape want in that sweet young lady's room? And behold, it was himself, reflected in a great mirror, the like of which Tom had never seen before.

And Tom, for the first time in his life, found out that he was dirty; and burst into tears with shame and anger; and turned to sneak up the chimney again and hide, and upset the fender, and threw the fire irons down, with a noise as of ten thousand tin kettles tied to ten thousand mad dogs' tails.

Up jumped the little white lady in her bed, and, seeing Tom, screamed as shrill as any peacock. In

rushed a stout old nurse from the next room, and seeing Tom likewise, made up her mind that he had come to rob, plunder, destroy, and burn; and dashed at him, as he lay over the fender, so fast that she caught him by the jacket.

But she did not hold him. Tom had been in a policeman's hands many a time, and out of them too, what is more: and he would have been ashamed to face his friends forever if he had been stupid enough to be caught by an old woman: so he doubled under the good lady's arm, across the room and out of the window in a moment.

But all under the window spread a tree, with great leaves, and sweet white flowers, almost as big as his head. It was a magnolia, I suppose; but Tom knew nothing about that, and cared less; for down the tree he went, like a cat, and across the garden lawn, and over the iron railings, and up the park towards the wood, leaving the old nurse to scream murder and fire at the window.

The under-gardener, mowing, saw Tom, and threw down his scythe, caught his leg in it, and cut his shin open, whereby he kept his bed for a week; but in his hurry he never knew it, and gave chase to poor Tom. The dairymaid heard the noise, got the churn between her knees, and tumbled over it, spilling all the cream; and yet she jumped up, and gave chase to Tom. A groom cleaning Sir John's hack at the

stables let him go loose, whereby he kicked himself lame in five minutes; but he ran out, and gave chase to Tom. Grimes upset the soot-sack in the new-graveled yard, and spoilt it all utterly; but he ran out, and gave chase to Tom. The old steward opened the park-gate in such a hurry, that he hung his pony's chin upon the spikes, and for aught I know it hangs there still; but he jumped off, and gave chase to Tom. The ploughman left his horses at the headland, and one jumped over the fence, and pulled the other into the ditch, plough and all; but he ran on, and gave chase to Tom. The keeper, who was taking a stoat out of a trap, let the stoat go, and caught his own finger; but he jumped up, and ran after Tom, and, considering what he said and how he looked, I should have been sorry for Tom if he had caught him. Sir John looked out of his study window (for he was an early old gentleman) and up at the nurse, and a marten dropped mud in his eye, so that he had at last to send for the doctor; and yet he ran out and gave chase to Tom. The Irishwoman, too, was walking up to the house to beg; she must have got round by some by-way; but she threw away her bundle, and gave chase to Tom likewise. Only my lady did not give chase; for when she had put her head out of the window, her night-wig fell into the garden, and she had to ring up her lady's maid, and send her down for it privately; which

quite put her out of the running, so that she came in nowhere, and is consequently not placed.

Tom, of course made for the woods. He had never been in a wood in his life; but he was sharp enough to know that he might hide in a bush, or swarm up a tree, and, altogether, had more chance there than in the open field. If he had not known that, he would have been foolisher than a mouse or a minnow.

But when he got into the wood, he found it a very different sort of a place from what he fancied. He pushed into a thick cover of rhododendrons, and found himself at once caught in a trap

"I must get out of this," thought Tom, "or I shall stay here till somebody comes to help me,—which is just what I don't want."

But how to get out was the difficult matter. And indeed I don't think he would ever have got out at all, but have stayed there till the cock-robins covered him with leaves, if he had not suddenly run his head against a wall.

Now, running your head against a wall is not pleasant, especially if it is a loose wall, with the stones all set on edge, and a sharp cornered one hits you between the eyes, and makes you see all manner of beautiful stars. The stars are very beautiful, certainly; but unfortunately they go in the twenty-thousandth part of a split second, and the pain which

comes after them does not. And so Tom hurt his head; but he was a brave boy, and did not mind that a penny. He guessed that over the wall the cover would end; and up he went, and over like a squirrel.

And there he was, out on the great grouse moors, which the country folk called Harthover Fell—heather and bog, and rock, stretching away and up, up to the very sky.

Now, Tom was a cunning little fellow—as cunning as an old Exmoor stag. Why not? Though he was but ten years old, he had lived longer than most stags, and had more wits to start with into the bargain.

He knew as well as a stag, that if he backed he might throw the hounds out. So the first thing he did when he was over the wall, was, to make the neatest double sharp to his right, and run along under the wall for nearly half a mile.

Whereby Sir John, and the keeper, and the steward, and the gardener, and the ploughman, and the dairymaid, and all the hue-and-cry together, went on ahead half a mile in the very opposite direction, and inside the wall, leaving him a mile off on the outside, while Tom heard their shouts die away in the wood, and chuckled to himself merrily.

At last he came to a dip in the land, and went to the bottom of it, and then he turned bravely away

from the wall, and up the moor; for he knew that he had put a hill between him and his enemies, and could go on without their seeing him.

But the Irish woman, alone of them all, had seen which way Tom went. She had kept ahead of every one the whole time; and yet she neither walked nor ran. She went along quite smoothly and gracefully, while her feet twinkled past each other so fast, that you could not see which was foremost; till every one asked the other who the strange woman was? and all agreed, for want of anything better to say, that she must be in league with Tom.

But when she came to the plantation they lost sight of her; and they could do no less. For she went quietly over the wall after Tom, and followed him wherever he went. Sir John and the rest saw no more of her; and out of sight was out of mind.

So Tom went on, and on, he hardly knew why; but he liked the great, wide, strange place, and the cool, fresh, bracing air. But he went more and more slowly as he got higher up the hill; for now the ground grew very bad indeed. Instead of soft turf and springy heather, he met great patches of flat limestone rock, just like ill-made pavements, with deep cracks between the stones and ledges, filled with ferns; so he had to hop from stone to stone, and now and then he slipped in between and hurt his little bare toes, though they were tolerably tough

ones; but still he would go on and up, he could not tell why.

What would Tom have said if he had seen, walking over the moor behind him, the very same Irishwoman who had taken his part upon the road? But whether it was that he looked too little behind him, or whether it was that she kept out of sight behind the rocks and knolls, he never saw her, though she saw him.

And now he began to get a little hungry, and very thirsty; for he had run a long way, and the sun had risen high in heaven, and the rock was as hot as an oven, and the air danced reels over it as it does over a lime-kiln, till everything round seemed quivering and melting in the glare.

But he could see nothing to eat anywhere, and still less to drink.

So he went on, and on, till his head spun round with the heat, and he thought he heard church-bells ringing, a long way off.

"Ah!" he thought, "where there is a church, there will be houses and people; and, perhaps, some one will give me a bit and a sup." So he set off again, to look for the church; for he was sure that he heard the bells quite plain.

And in a minute more, when he looked round, he stopped again, and said, "Why, what a big place the world is!"

And so it was; for, from the top of the mountain, he could see--what could he not see?

Behind him, far below, was Harthover, and the dark woods, and the shining salmon river; and on his left, far below, was the town, and the smoking chimneys of the collieries; and far, far away, the river widened to the shining sea; and little white specks, which were ships, lay on its bosom. Before him lay, spread out like a map, great plains, and farms, and villages, amid dark knots of trees. They all seemed at his very feet; but he had sense to see that they were long miles away.

And to his right rose moor after moor, hill after hill, till they faded away, blue into blue sky. But between him and those moors, and really at his very feet, lay something to which, as soon as Tom saw it, he determined to go, for that was the place for him.

A deep, deep green and rocky valley, very narrow, and filled with wood; but through the wood, hundreds of feet below him, he could see a clear stream glance. Oh, if he could but get down to that stream! Then, by the stream, he saw the roof of a little cottage, and a little garden, set out in squares and beds. And there was a tiny little red thing moving in the garden, no bigger than a fly. As Tom looked down he saw that it was a woman in a red petticoat. Ah! perhaps she would give him something to eat. And there were the church-bells ringing again. Surely,

there must be a village down there. Well, nobody would know him, or what had happened at the Place. The news could not have got there yet, even if Sir John had set all the policemen in the county after him; and he could get down there in five minutes.

Tom was quite right about the hue-and-cry not having got thither; for he had come, without knowing it, the best part of ten miles from Harthover; but he was wrong about getting down in five minutes, for the cottage was more than a mile off, and a good thousand feet below.

However, down he went, like a brave little man as he was, though he was very foot-sore, and tired, and hungry, and thirsty; while the church-bells rang so loud, he began to think that they must be inside his own head, and the river chimed and tinkled far below: and this was the song which it sang:—

Clear and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow and dreaming pool;
Cool and clear, cool and clear,
By shining shingle, and foaming weir;
Under the crag where the ouzel sings,
And the ivied wall where the church-bell rings,
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

Dank and foul, dank and foul,
By the smoky town in its murky cowl;

Foul and dank, foul and dank,
By wharf and sewer and slimy bank;
Darker and darker the further I go,
Baser and baser the richer I grow;
Who dare sport with the sin-defiled?
Shrink from me, turn from me, mother and child.

Strong and free, strong and free,
The floodgates are open, away to the sea!
Free and strong, free and strong,
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along
To the golden sands and the leaping bar,
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar,
As I lose myself in the infinite main,
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again.
Undefiled, for the undefiled,
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

So Tom went down; and all the while he never saw the Irishwoman going down behind him.

. . . . . .

A mile off, and a thousand feet down. So Tom found it; though it seemed as if he could have chucked a pebble on to the back of the woman in the red petticoat, who was weeding in the garden, or even across the dale to the rocks beyond.

For the bottom of the valley was just one field broad, and on the other side ran the stream; and above it, gray crag, gray down, gray stair, gray moor, walled up to heaven.

At last he got to the bottom. But, behold, it was not the bottom—as people usually find when they are coming down a mountain. For at the foot of the crag were heaps and heaps of fallen limestone of every size from that of your head to that of a stage wagon, with holes between them full of sweet heath-fern; and before Tom got through them, he was out in the bright sunshine again; and then he felt, once for all and suddenly, as people generally do, that he was b-e-a-t, beat.

You must expect to be beat a few times in your life, little man, if you live such a life as a man ought to live, let you be as strong and healthy as you may, and when you are, you will find it a very ugly feeling. I hope that that day you may have a stout stanch friend by you who is not beat; for if you have not, you had best lie where you are, and wait for better times, as poor Tom did.

He could not get on. The sun was burning, and yet he felt chill all over. He was quite empty, and yet he felt quite sick. There was but two hundred yards of smooth pasture between him and the cottage, and yet he could not walk down it. He could hear the stream murmuring only one field beyond it, and yet it seemed to him as if it was a hundred miles off.

He lay down on the grass till the beetles ran over him, and the flies settled on his nose. I don't know

when he would have got up again, if the gnats and the midgets had not taken compassion on him. But the gnats blew their trumpets so loud in his ear, and the midgets nibbled so at his hands and face wherever they could find a place free from soot, so that at last he woke up, and stumbled away, down over a low wall, and into a narrow road, and up to the cottage door. . . . . .

He came slowly up to the open door, which was all hung round with clematis and roses; and then peeped in, half afraid.

And there sat by the empty fireplace, which was filled with a pot of sweet herbs, the nicest old woman that ever was seen, in her red petticoat, and short dimity bedgown, and clean white cap, with a black silk handkerchief over it, tied under her chin.

"What art thou, and what dost want?" cried the old dame. "A chimney-sweep! Away with thee. I'll have no sweeps here."

"Water," said poor little Tom, quite faint.

"Water? There's plenty i' the back," she said, quite sharply.

"But I can't get there; I'm most clemmed with hunger and drought." And Tom sank down upon the door-step, and laid his head against the post.

And the old dame looked at him through her spectacles one minute, and two, and three; and then

she said, "He's sick; and a bairn's a bairn, sweep or none."

"Water," said Tom.

"God forgive me!" and she put by her spectacles, and rose, and came to Tom. "Water's bad for thee: I'll give thee milk." And she toddled off into the next room, and brought a cup of milk and a bit of bread.

Tom drank the milk off at one draught, and then looked up, revived.

But when Tom tried to get up, he was so tired and giddy that she had to help him and lead him.

She put him in an out-house upon soft sweet hay and an old rug, and bade him sleep off his walk, and she would come to him in an hour's time.

And so she went in again, expecting Tom to fall fast asleep at once.

But Tom did not fall asleep.

Instead of it he turned and tossed and kicked about in the strangest way, and felt so hot all over that he longed to get into the river and cool himself; and then he fell half asleep, and dreamt that he heard the little white lady crying to him, "Oh, you're so dirty; go and be washed;" and then that he heard the Irishwoman saying, "Those that wish to be clean, clean they will be." And then he heard the church-bells ring so loud, close to him, too, that he was sure it must be Sunday, and he would go to

church, and see what a church was like inside, for he had never been in one, poor little fellow, in all his life. But the people would never let him come in, all over soot and dirt like that. He must go to the river and wash first. And he said out loud again and again, though being half asleep he did not know it, "I must be clean, I must be clean."

And all of a sudden he found himself, not in the out-house on the hay, but in the middle of a meadow, over the road, with the stream just before him, saying continually, "I must be clean, I must be clean." He had got there on his own legs, between sleep and awake, as children will often get out of bed, and go about the room, when they are not quite well. But he was not a bit surprised, and went on to the bank of the brook, and lay down on the grass, and looked into the clear limestone water, with every pebble at the bottom bright and clean, while the little silver trout dashed about in fright at the sight of his black face; and he dipped his hand in and found it so cool, cool, cool; and he said, "I will be a fish; I will swim in the water; I must be clean, I must be clean."

So he pulled off all his clothes in such haste that he tore some of them, which was easy enough with such ragged old things. And he put his poor hot sore feet into the water; and then his legs; and the further he went in, the more the church-bells rang in his head.

"Ah," said Tom, "I must be quick and wash myself; the bells are ringing quite loud now: and they will stop soon, and then the door will be shut, and I shall never be able to get in at all."

And all the while he never saw the Irishwoman: not behind him this time, but before.

For just before he came to the river-side, she had stepped down into the cool clear water; and her shawl and her petticoat floated off her, and the green water-weeds floated round her sides, and the white water-lilies floated round her head, and the fairies of the stream came up from the bottom, and bore her away and down upon their arms; for she was the Queen of them all; and perhaps of more besides.

"Where have you been?" they asked her.

"I have been smoothing sick folk's pillows, and whispering sweet dreams into their ears; opening cottage casements, to let out the stifling air; coaxing little children away from gutters and foul pools, where fever breeds; turning women from the gin-shop door and staying men's hands as they were going to strike their wives; doing all I can to help those who will not help themselves: and little enough that is, and weary work for me. But I have brought you a new little brother, and watched him safe all the way here."

Then all the fairies laughed for joy at the thought that they had a little brother coming.

"But mind, maidens, he must not see you, or know that you are here. He is but a savage now, and like the beasts which perish; and from the beasts which perish he must learn. So you must not play with him, or speak to him, or let him see you; but only keep him from being harmed."

Then the fairies were sad, because they could not play with their new brother; but they always did what they were told.

And their Queen floated away down the river, and hither she went, thither she came. But all this, Tom, of course, never saw or heard: and perhaps if he had, it would have made little difference in the story; for he was so hot and thirsty, and longed so to be clean for once, that he tumbled himself as quick as he could into the clear cool stream.

And he had not been in it two minutes before he fell fast asleep, into the quietest, sunniest, cosiest sleep that ever he had in his life, and he dreamed about the green meadows by which he had walked that morning, and the tall elm-trees, and the sleeping cows: and after that he dreamed of nothing at all.

The reason of his falling into such a delightful sleep is very simple, and yet hardly any one has found it out. It was merely that the fairies took him.

. . . . . .

Ah, now comes the most wonderful part of this

wonderful story. Tom, when he woke, for of course he woke,—children always wake after they have slept exactly as long as is good for them,—found himself swimming about in the stream, being about four inches, or—that I may be accurate—3.87902 inches long, and having round the parotid region of his fauces a set of external gills (I hope you understand all the big words) just like those of a sucking eft, which he mistook for a lace frill, till he pulled at them, found he hurt himself, and made up his mind that they were part of himself, and best left alone.

In fact, the fairies had turned him into a water-baby.

And, therefore, the keeper, and the groom, and Sir John made a great mistake, and were very unhappy (Sir John at least) without any reason, when they found a black thing in the water, and said it was Tom's body, and that he had been drowned. They were utterly mistaken. Tom was quite alive, and cleaner and merrier than he ever had been. The fairies had washed him, you see, in the swift river, so thoroughly, that not only his dirt, but his whole husk and shell had been washed quite off him, and the pretty little real Tom was washed out of the inside of it. We will hope Tom will be wiser, now he has got safe out of his sooty old shell.

But Tom was very happy in the water. He had

been sadly overworked in the land-world; and so now, to make up for that, he had nothing but holidays in the water-world for a long, long time to come. He had nothing to do now but enjoy himself, and look at all the pretty things which are to be seen in the cool clear water-world, where the sun is never too hot, and the frost is never too cold.

Now you must know that all things under the water talk: only not such a language as ours; but such as horses, and dogs, and cows, and birds talk to each other; and Tom soon learned to understand them and talk to them; so that he might have had very pleasant company if he had only been a good boy. But I am sorry to say, he was too like some other little boys, very fond of hunting and tormenting creatures for mere sport. Some people say that boys cannot help it; that it is nature, and only a proof that we are all originally descended from beasts of prey. But whether it is nature or not, little boys can help it, and must help it. For if they have naughty, low, mischievous tricks in their nature, as monkeys have, that is no reason why they should give way to those tricks like monkeys, who know no better. And therefore they must not torment dumb creatures; for if they do, a certain old lady who is coming will surely give them exactly what they deserve.

But Tom did not know that; and he pecked and hawked the poor water-things about sadly, till they

were all afraid of him, and got out of his way, or crept into their shells; so he had no one to speak to or play with.

The water-fairies, of course, were very sorry to see him so unhappy, and longed to take him, and tell him how naughty he was, and teach him to be good, and to play and romp with him too; but they had been forbidden to do that. Tom had to learn his lesson for himself by sound and sharp experience, as many another foolish person has to do, though there may be many a kind heart yearning over them all the while, and longing to teach them what they can only teach themselves. . . . . .

But what became of little Tom?

He was going along the rocks in three-fathom water, watching the pollock catch prawns, and the wrasses nibble barnacles off the rocks, shells and all, when he saw a round cage of green withes; and inside it, looking very much ashamed of himself, sat the lobster, twiddling his horns, instead of thumbs.

"What! have you been naughty, and have they put you in the lock-up?" asked Tom.

The lobster felt a little indignant at such a notion, but he was too much depressed in spirits to argue; so he only said, "I can't get out."

"Why did you get in?"

"After that nasty piece of dead fish." He had thought it looked and smelt very nice when he was

outside, and so it did, for a lobster; but now he turned round and abused it because he was angry with himself.

"Where did you get in?"

"Through that round hole at the top."

"Then why don't you get out through it?"

"Because I can't;" and the lobster twiddled his horns more fiercely than ever, but he was forced to confess.

"I have jumped upwards, downwards, backwards and sideways, at least four thousand times; and I can't get out: I always get up underneath there, and can't find the hole."

Tom looked at the trap, and having more wit than the lobster, he saw plainly enough what was the matter; as you may if you will look at a lobster-pot.

"Stop a bit," said Tom. "Turn your tail up to me, and I'll pull you through hindforemost, and then you won't stick in the spikes."

But the lobster was so stupid and clumsy that he couldn't hit the hole. Like a great many fox hunters, he was very sharp as long as he was in his own country; but as soon as they get out of it they lose their heads; and so the lobster, so to speak, lost his tail.

Tom reached and clawed down the hole after him, till he caught hold of him; and then, as was to be

expected, the clumsy lobster pulled him in head foremost.

"Hullo? here is a pretty business," said Tom. "Now take your great claws, and break the points off those spikes, and then we shall both get out easily."

"Dear me, I never thought of that," said the lobster; "and after all the experience of life that I have had!"

You see, experience is of very little good unless a man, or a lobster, has wit enough to make use of it. For a good many people, like old Polonius, have seen all the world, and yet remain little better than children after all.

But they had not got half the spikes away, when they saw a great dark cloud over them; and lo and behold, it was the otter.

How she did grin and grin when she saw Tom. "Yar!" said she, "you little meddlesome wretch, I have you now!" And she crawled all over the pot to get in.

Tom was horribly frightened, and still more frightened when she found the hole in the top, and squeezed herself right down through it, all eyes and teeth. But no sooner was her head inside than valiant Mr. Lobster caught her by the nose, and held on.

And there they were all three in the pot, rolling

over and over, and very tight packing it was. And the lobster tore at the otter, and the otter tore at the lobster, and both squeezed and thumped poor Tom till he had no breath left in his body; and I don't know what would have happened to him if he had not at last got on the otter's back, and safe out of the hole.

He was right glad when he got out: but he would not desert his friend who had saved him; and the first time he saw his tail uppermost he caught hold of it, and pulled with all his might.

But the lobster would not let go.

"Come along," said Tom; "don't you see she is dead?" And so she was, quite drowned and dead.

And that was the end of the wicked otter.

But the lobster would not let go.

"Come along, you stupid old stick-in-the-mud," cried Tom, "or the fisherman will catch you!" And that was true, for Tom felt some one above beginning to haul up the pot.

But the lobster would not let go.

Tom saw the fisherman haul him up to the boat-side, and thought it was all up with him. But when Mr. Lobster saw the fisherman, he gave such a furious and tremendous snap, that he snapped out of his hand, and out of the pot, and safe into the sea. But he left his knobbed claw behind him; for it

never came into his stupid head to let go after all, so he just shook his claw off as the easier method.

Tom asked the lobster why he never thought of letting go. He said very determinedly that it was a point of honor among lobsters.

And now happened to Tom a most wonderful thing, for he had not left the lobster five minutes before he came upon a water-baby.

A real live water-baby, sitting on the white sand, very busy about a little point of rock. And when it saw Tom it looked up for a moment, and then cried, "Why you are not one of us. You are a new baby! Oh, how delightful!"

And it ran to Tom, and Tom ran to it, and they hugged and kissed each other for ever so long, they did not know why. But they did not want any introductions there under the water.

At last Tom said, "Oh, where have you been all this while? I have been looking for you so long, and I have been so lonely."

"We have been here for days and days. There are hundreds of us about the rocks. How was it you did not see us, or hear us when we sing and romp every evening before we go home?"

Tom looked at the baby again, and then he said:

"Well this is wonderful! I have seen things just like you again and again, but I thought you were

shells, or sea-creatures I never took you for water-babies like myself."

Now, was that not very odd? So odd, indeed, that you will, no doubt, want to know how it happened, and why Tom could never find a water-baby till after he had got the lobster out of the pot. And, if you will read this story nine times over, and then think for yourself, you will find out why.

"Now," said the baby, "come and help me, or I shall not have finished before my brothers and sisters come, and it is time to go home."

"What shall I help you at?"

"At this poor dear little rock; a great clumsy boulder came rolling by in the last storm, and knocked all its head off, and rubbed off all its flowers. And now I must plant it again with sea-weeds, and coraline, and anemones, and I will make it the prettiest little rock-garden on all the shore."

So they worked away at the rock, and planted it and smoothed the sand down round it, and capital fun they had till the tide began to turn. And then Tom heard all the other babies coming, laughing and singing and shouting and romping; and the noise they made was just like the noise of the ripple. So he knew that he had been hearing and seeing the water-babies all along; only he did not know them, because his eyes and ears were not opened.

And in they came, dozens and dozens of them,

some bigger than Tom, and some smaller, all in the neatest little white bathing-dresses; and when they found that he was a new baby, they hugged him and kissed him, and then put him in the middle and danced round him on the sand, and there was no one ever so happy as poor little Tom.

"Now then," they cried all at once, "we must come away home, we must come away home, or the tide will leave us dry. We have mended all the broken sea-weed, and put all the rock-pools in order, and planted all the shells again in the sand, and nobody will see where the ugly storm swept in last week."

And this is the reason why the rock-pools are always so neat and clean; because the water-babies come in shore after every storm, to sweep them out, and comb them down, and put them all to rights again.

But I wish Tom had given up all his naughty tricks, and left off tormenting dumb animals, now that he had plenty of playfellows to amuse him. Instead of that, I am sorry to say, he would meddle with the creatures, all but the water-snakes, for they would stand no nonsense. So he tickled the madrepores, to make them shut up; and frightened the crabs, to make them hide in the sand and peep out at him with the tips of their eyes: and put stones into the anemones' mouths, to make them fancy that their dinner was coming.

The other children warned him, and said, "Take care what you are at. Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid is coming." But Tom never heeded them, being quite riotous with high spirits and good luck, till, one Friday morning early, Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid came indeed.

A very tremendous lady she was; and when the children saw her, they all stood in a row, very upright indeed, and smoothed down their bathing-dresses, and put their hands behind them, just as if they were going to be examined by the inspector.

And she had on a black bonnet, and a black shawl, and no crinoline at all; and a pair of large green spectacles, and a great hooked nose, hooked so much that the bridge of it stood quite up above her eyebrows; and under her arm she carried a great birch-rod. Indeed, she was so ugly, that Tom was tempted to make faces at her; but did not; for he did not admire the look of the birch-rod under her arm.

And she looked at the children one by one, and was very much pleased with them, though she never asked them one question about how they were behaving; and then began giving them all sorts of nice sea-things—sea-cakes, sea-apples, sea-oranges, sea-bull's-eyes, sea-toffee, and to the very best of all she gave sea-ices, made out of sea-cows' cream, which never melt under water.

Now little Tom watched all these sweet things given away, till his mouth watered, and his eyes grew as round as an owl's. For he hoped that his turn would come at last; and so it did. For the lady called him up, and held out her fingers with something in them, and popped it into his mouth; and, lo and behold, it was nasty cold hard pebble.

"You are a very cruel woman," said he, and began to whimper.

"And you are a very cruel boy; who puts pebbles into the sea-anemones' mouths, to take them in, and make them fancy that they had caught a good dinner? As you did to them, so I must do to you."

"Who told you that?" said Tom.

"You did yourself, this very minute."

Tom had never opened his lips; so he was very much taken aback indeed.

"Yes; every one tells me exactly what they have done wrong; and that without knowing it themselves. So there is no use trying to hide anything from me. Now go and be a good boy, and I will put no more pebbles in your mouth, if you put none in other creatures'."

"I did not know there was any harm in it," said Tom.

"Then you know now. People continually say that to me; but I tell them, if you don't know that fire burns, that is no reason that it should not burn you;

and if you don't know that dirt breeds fever, that is no reason why the fever should not kill you. . The lobster did not know that there was any harm in getting into the lobster-pot; but it caught him all the same."

"Dear me," thought Tom, "she knows everything!" And so she did, indeed.

And there came over the lady's face a very curious expression—very solemn, and very sad; and yet very, very sweet. And she looked up and away, as if she were gazing through the sea, and through the sky, at something far, far off; and as she did so, there came such a quiet, tender, patient, hopeful smile over her face, that Tom thought for the moment that she did not look ugly at all. And no more she did; for she was like a great many people who have not a pretty feature in their faces, and yet are lovely to behold, and draw little children's hearts to them at once; because, though the house is plain enough, yet from the windows a beautiful and good spirit is looking forth.

And Tom smiled in her face, she looked so pleasant for the moment. And the strange fairy smiled too, and said:

"Yes. You thought me very ugly, just now, did you not?"

Tom hung down his head, and got very red about the ears.

"And I am very ugly. I am the ugliest fairy in the world; and I shall be, till the people behave themselves as they ought to do. And then I shall grow as handsome as my sister, who is the loveliest fairy in the world; and her name is Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby. So she begins where I end, and I begin where she ends; and those that will not listen to her must listen to me, as you will see. Now, all of you run away, except Tom; and he may stay and see what I am going to do. It will be a very good warning for him to begin with, before he goes to school.

"Now, Tom, every Friday I come down here and call up all who have ill-used little children, and serve them as they served the children."

And at that Tom was frightened, and crept under a stone, which made the two crabs who lived there very angry, and frightened their friend the butter-fish into flapping hysterics; but he would not move for them.

And first she called up all the doctors who give little children so much physic, (they were most of them old ones; for the young ones have learned better, all but a few army surgeons, who still fancy that a baby's inside is much like a Scotch grenadier's,) and she set them all in a row; and very rueful they looked; for they knew what was coming.

And first she pulled all their teeth out; and then she bled them all round; and then she dosed them

with calomel, and jalap, and salts and senna, and brimstone and treacle; and horrible faces they made; and then she gave a great emetic of mustard and water, and no basins; and began all over again; and that was the way she spent the morning.

And then she called up a whole troop of foolish ladies, who pinched up their children's waists and toes; and she laced them all up in tight stays, so that they were choked and sick, and their noses grew red, and their hands and feet swelled; and then she crammed their poor feet into the most dreadfully tight boots, and made them all dance, which they did most clumsily indeed; and then she asked them how they liked it; and when they said not at all, she let them go; because they had only done it out of foolish fashion, fancying it was for their children's good, as if wasps' waists and pigs' toes could be pretty or wholesome, or of any use to anybody.

Then she called up all the careless nursery-maids, and stuck pins into them all over, and wheeled them about in perambulators with tight straps across their stomachs and their heads and arms hanging over the side, till they were quite sick and stupid, and would have had sunstrokes: but, being under the water, they could only have water-strokes; which, I assure you, are nearly as bad, as you will find if you try to sit under a mill-wheel. And mind—when you hear a rumbling at the bottom of the sea, sailors will tell

you that it is a ground-swell: but now you know better. It is the old lady wheeling the maids in perambulators.

And by that time she was so tired, she had to go to luncheon.

Tom did not quite dislike the old lady; but he could not help thinking her a little spiteful,—and no wonder if she was, poor old soul; for, if she has to wait to grow handsome till people do as they would be done by, she will have to wait a very long time.

But Tom longed to ask her one question; and after all whenever she looked at him, she did not look cross at all; and now and then there was a funny smile in her face, and she chuckled to herself in a way which gave Tom courage, and at last he said:

"Pray, ma'am, may I ask you a question?"

"Centainly, my little dear."

"Why don't you bring all the bad masters here, and serve them out too? The butties that knock about the poor collier-boys; and the nailers that file off their lads' noses and hammer their fingers; and all the master-sweeps, like my master Grimes?"

Then the old lady looked so very stern that Tom was quite frightened, and sorry that he had been so bold. But she was not angry with him. She only answered, "I look after them all the week round;

and they are in a very different place from this, because they knew that they were doing wrong."

She spoke very quietly; but there was something in her voice which made Tom tingle from head to foot, as if he had got into a shoal of sea-nettles.

"But these people," she went on, "did not know that they were doing wrong; they were only stupid and impatient; and therefore I only punish them till they become patient, and learn to use their common sense like reasonable beings. But as for chimney-sweeps, and collier-boys, and nailers' lads, my sister has set good people to stop all that sort of thing; and very much obliged to her I am; for if she could only stop the cruel masters from ill-using poor children, I should grow handsome at least a thousand years sooner. And now do you be a good boy, and do as you would be done by, which they did not; and then, when my sister, Madame Doasyouwouldbedoneby, comes on Sunday, perhaps she will take notice of you, and teach you how to behave. She understands that better than I do." And so she went.

Tom was very glad to hear that there was no chance of meeting Grimes again, though he was a little sorry for him, considering that he used sometimes to give him the leavings of the beer: but he determined to be a very good boy all Saturday; and he was; for he never frightened one crab, nor tickled

any live corals, nor put stones into the sea-anemones' mouths, to make them fancy they had got a dinner; and, when Sunday morning came, sure enough, Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby came too. Whereat all the little children began dancing and clapping their hands, and Tom danced too with all his might.

And as for the pretty lady, I cannot tell you what the color of her hair was, or of her eyes: no more could Tom; for when any one looks at her, all they can think of is, that she has the sweetest, kindest, tenderest, funniest, merriest face they ever saw, or want to see. But Tom saw that she was a very tall woman, as tall as her sister; but instead of being gnarly, and horny, and scaly, and prickly, like her, she was the most nice, soft, fat, smooth, pussy, cuddly, delicious creature who ever nursed a baby: and she understood babies thoroughly, for she had plenty of her own, whole rows and regiments of them, and has to this day. And all her delight was, whenever she had a spare moment, to play with babies, in which she showed herself a woman of sense; for babies are the best company, and the pleasantest playfellows, in the world; at least, so all the wise people in the world think. And therefore when the children saw her, they naturally all caught hold of her, and pulled her till she sat down on a stone, and climbed into her lap, and clung round her neck, and caught hold of her hands; and then they

all put their thumbs into their mouths, and began cuddling and purring like so many kittens, as they ought to have done. While those who could get nowhere else sat down on the sand, and cuddled her feet,—for no one, you know, wears shoes in the water, except horrid old bathing-women, who are afraid of the water-babies pinching their horny toes. And Tom stood staring at them; for he could not understand what it was all about.

"And who are you, you little darling?" she said.

"Oh, that is the new baby!" they all cried, pulling their thumbs out of their mouths; "and he never had any mother," and they all put their thumbs back again, for they did not wish to lose any time.

"Then I will be his mother, and he shall have the very best place; so get out all of you, this moment."

And she took up two great armfuls of babies—nine hundred under one arm, and thirteen hundred under the other—and threw them away, right and left, into the water. But they minded it no more than the naughty boys in Struwelpeter minded when St. Nicholas dipped them in his inkstand; and did not even take their thumbs out of their mouths, but came paddling and wriggling back to her like so many tadpoles, till you could see nothing of her from head to foot for the swarm of little babies.

But she took Tom in her arms, and laid him in the softest place of all, and kissed him, and patted him,

and talked to him, tenderly and low, such things as he had never heard before in his life; and Tom looked up into her eyes, and loved her, and loved, till he fell fast asleep from pure love.

And when he woke, she was telling the children a story. And what story did she tell them? One story she told them, which begins every Christmas Eve, and yet never ends at all for ever and ever; and, as she went on, the children took their thumbs out of their mouths, and listened quite seriously; but not sadly at all; for she never told them anything sad; and Tom listened too, and never grew tired of listening. And he listened so long that he fell fast asleep again, and, when he woke, the lady was nursing him still.

"Don't go away," said little Tom. "This is so nice. I never had any one to cuddle me before."

"Don't go away," said all the children; "you have not sung us one song."

"Well, I have time for only one. So what shall it be?"

"The doll you lost! The doll you lost!" cried all the babies at once.

So the strange fairy sang:—

I once had a sweet little doll, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world;
Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,
And her hair was so charmingly curled.

But I lost my poor little doll, dears,
As I played in the heath one day;
And I cried for her more than a week, dears;
But I never could find where she lay.

I found my poor little doll, dears,
As I played in the heath one day;
Folks say she is terribly changed, dears,
For her paint is all washed away.
And her arm trodden off by the cows, dears,
And her hair not the least bit curled:
Yet for old sakes' sake she is still, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world.

What a silly song for a fairy to sing!

And what silly water-babies to be quite delighted at it!

"Now," said the fairy to Tom, "will you be a good boy for my sake, and torment no more sea-beasts, till I come back?"

"And you will cuddle me again?" said poor little Tom.

"Of course I will, you little duck. I should like to take you with me, and cuddle you all the way only I must not;" and away she went.

So Tom really tried to be a good boy, and tormented no sea-beasts after that, as long as he lived; and he is quite alive, I assure you, still.

TWO YEARS AGO

TWO YEARS AGO.

PENALVA COURT, about half a mile from the quay, is "like a house in a story;"—a house of seven gables, and those very shaky ones; a house of useless long passages, useless turrets, vast lumber attics where maids see ghosts, lofty garden and yard walls of gray stone, round which the wind and rain are lashing through the dreary darkness; low oak-ribbed ceilings; windows which once were mullioned with stone, but now with wood painted white; walls which were once oak-wainscot, but have been painted like the mullions, to the disgust of Elsley Vavasour, poet, its occupant in March, 1854, who forgot that, while the oak was left dark, no man could have seen to read in the rooms a yard from the window.

He has, however, little reason to complain of the one drawing-room, where he and his wife are sitting, so pleasant has she made it look, in spite of the plainness of the furniture. A bright log-fire is burning on the hearth. There are a few good books too, and a few handsome prints; while some really valu-

able knick-knacks are set out, with pardonable ostentation, on a little table covered with crimson velvet. It is only cotton velvet, if you look close at it; but the things are pretty enough to catch the eye of all visitors; and Mrs. Heale, the doctor's wife (who always calls Mrs. Vavasour "my lady," though she does not love her), and Mrs. Trebooze, of Trebooze, always finger them over when they have an opportunity, and whisper to each other, half contemptuously, "Ah, poor thing! there's a sign that she has seen better days."

And better days, in one sense, Mrs. Vavasour had seen. I am afraid, indeed, that she has more than once regretted the morning when she ran away in a hack-cab from her brother Lord Scoutbush's house in Eaton Square, to be married to Elsley Vavasour, the gifted author of "A Soul's Agonies, and other Poems." He was a lion then, with foolish women running after him, and turning his head once and for all; and Lucia St. Just was a wild Irish girl, new to London society, all feeling and romance, and literally all; for there was little real intellect underlying her passionate sensibility. So when the sensibility burnt itself out, as it generally does; and when children, and the weak health which comes with them, and the cares of a household, and money difficulties, were absorbing her little powers, Elsley Vavasour began to fancy that his wife was a very common-

place person, who was fast losing even her good looks and her good temper. So, on the whole, they were not happy. Elsley was an affectionate man, and honorable to a fantastic nicety; but he was vain, capricious, over-sensitive, craving for admiration and distinction; and it was not enough for him that his wife loved him, bore him children, kept his accounts, mended and moiled all day long for him and his; he wanted her to act the public for him exactly when he was hungry for praise; and that not the actual, but an altogether ideal, public; to worship him as a deity, "live for him and him alone," "realize" his poetic dreams of marriage-bliss, and talk sentiment with him, or listen to him talking sentiment to her, when she would much sooner be safe in bed burying all the petty cares of the day, and the pain in her back too, poor thing! in sound sleep; and so it befell that they often quarreled and wrangled, and that they were quarreling and wrangling this very night.

Who cares to know how it began? Who cares to hear how it went on,—the stupid, aimless skirmish of bitter words, between two people who had forgotten themselves? I believe it began with Elsley's being vexed at her springing up two or three times, fancying that she heard the children cry, while he wanted to be quiet, and sentimentalize over the roaring of the wind outside. Then—she thought of noth-

ing but those children. Why did she not take a book and occupy her mind? To which she had her pert, though just answer, about her mind having quite enough to do to keep clothes on the children's backs, and so forth,—let who list imagine the miserable little squabble,—till she says: "I know what has put you out so to-night—nothing but the news of my sister's coming." He answers, "That her sister is as little to him as to any man; as welcome to come now as she has been to stay away these three years."

"Ah, it's very well to say that; but you have been a different person ever since that letter came." And so she torments him into an angry self-justification (which she takes triumphantly as a confession) that "it is very disagreeable to have his thoughts broken in on by one who has no sympathy with him and his pursuits, and who—" and at that point he wisely stops short, for he was going to throw down a very ugly gage of battle.

Thrown down or not, Lucia snatches at it.

"Ah, I understand; poor Valentia! you always hated her."

"I did not; but she is so brusque, and excited, and—"

"Be so kind as not to abuse my family. You may say what you will of me; but—"

"And what have your family done for me, pray?"

"Why, considering that we are now living rent-free in my brother's house, and—" She stops in her turn; for her pride and her prudence also will not let her tell him that Valentia has been clothing her and the children for the last three years. He is just the man to forbid her on the spot to receive any more presents, and to sacrifice her comfort to his own pride. But what she has said is quite enough to bring out a very angry answer, which she, expecting, nips in the bud by,

"For goodness' sake, don't speak so loud; I don't want the servants to hear."

"I am not speaking loud" (he has not yet opened his lips). "That is your old trick to prevent my defending myself, while you are driving one mad. How dare you taunt me with being a pensioner on your brother's bounty? I'll go up to town again and take lodgings there. I need not be beholden to any aristocrat of them all. I have my own station in the real world, the world of intellect; I have my own friends; I have made myself a name without his help; and I can live without his help, he shall find!"

"Which name were you speaking of?" rejoins she, looking up at him, with all her native Irish humor flashing up for a moment in her naughty eyes. The next minute she would have given her hand not to have said it, for, with a very terrible word, Elsley springs to his feet and dashes out of the room.

She hears him catch up his hat and cloak, and hurry out into the rain, slamming the door behind him. She springs up to call him back, but he is gone, and she dashes herself on the floor, and bursts into an agony of weeping over "young bliss never to return!" Not in the least. Her principal fear is lest he should catch cold in the rain. She takes up her work again, and stitches away in the comfortable certainty that in half an hour she will have recovered her temper, and he also; that they will pass a sulky night; and to-morrow, by about mid-day, without explanation or formal reconciliation, have become as good friends as ever. "Perhaps," says she to herself, with a woman's sense of power, "if he be very much ashamed and very wet, I'll pity him and make friends to-night."

Miserable enough are these little squabbles. Why will two people, who have sworn to love and cherish each other utterly, and who, on the whole, do what they have sworn, behave to each other as they dare for very shame behave to no one else? Is it that, as every beautiful thing has its hideous antitype, this mutual shamelessness is the devil's ape of mutual confidence? Perhaps it cannot be otherwise with beings compact of good and evil. When the veil of reserve is withdrawn from between two souls, it must be withdrawn for evil, as for good, till the two natures, which ought to seek rest, each in the other's

inmost depths, may at last spring apart, confronting each other recklessly with, "There, you see me as I am; you know the worst of me, and I of you; take me as you find me; what care I?"

Elsley and Lucia have not yet arrived at that terrible crisis, though they are on the path toward it—the path of little carelessnesses, rudenesses, ungoverned words and tempers, and, worst of all, of that half-confidence, which is certain to avenge itself by irritation and quarreling; for if two married people will not tell each other in love what they ought, they will be sure to tell each other in anger what they ought not. It is plain enough already that Elsley has his weak point, which must not be touched, something about "a name," which Lucia is to be expected to ignore,—as if anything which really exists could be ignored while two people lived together night and day, for better or worse. Till the thorn is out, the wound will not heal; and till that matter (whatever it may be) is set right, by confession and absolution, there will be no peace for them, for they are living in a lie; and, unless it be a very little one indeed, better perhaps, that they should go on to that terrible crisis of open defiance. It may end in disgust, hatred, madness; but it may, too, end in each falling again upon the other's bosom, and sobbing out through holy tears, "Yes, you do know the worst of me, and yet you love me still. This is hap-

piness, to find one's self most loved when one most hates one's self! God, help us to confess our sins to thee, as we have done to each other, and to begin life again like little children, struggling hand in hand out of this lowest pit, up the steep path which leads to life, and strength, and peace."

Heaven grant that it may so end! But now Elsley has gone raging out into the raging darkness, trying to prove to himself the most injured of men, and to hate his wife as much as possible, though the fool knows the whole time that he loves her better than anything on earth, even than that "fame," on which he tries to fatten his lean soul, snapping greedily at every scrap that falls in his way, and, in default, snapping at everybody and everything else. And little comfort it gives him. Why should it? What comfort, save in being wise and strong? And is he the wiser or stronger for being told by a reviewer that he has written fine words, or has failed in writing them, or to have silly women writing to ask for his autograph, or for leave to set his songs to music? Nay, shocking as the question may seem, is he the wiser and stronger man for being a poet of all, and a genius? provided, of course, that the word genius is used in its modern meaning, of a person who can say prettier things than his neighbors. I think not. Be it as it may, away goes the poor genius, his long cloak, picturesque enough in calm

weather, fluttering about uncomfortably enough, while the rain washes his long curls into swabs, out through the old garden, between storm-swept laurels, beneath dark groaning pines, and through a door in the wall which opens into the lane.

The lane leads downward, on the right, into the village. He is in no temper to meet his fellow-creatures, even to see the comfortable gleam through their windows, as the sailors close round the fire with wife and child; so he turns to the left, up the deep stone-banked lane, which leads toward the cliff, dark now as pitch, for it is overhung, right and left, with deep oak-wood.

It is no easy matter to proceed, though, for the wind pours down the lane as through a funnel, and the road is of slippery bare slate, worn here and there into puddles of greasy clay, and Elsley slips back half of every step, while his wrath, as he tires, oozes out of his heels. Moreover, those dark trees above him, tossing their heads impatiently against the scarcely less dark sky, strike an awe into him,—a sense of loneliness, almost of fear. An uncanny, bad night it is; and he is out on a bad errand; and he knows it, and wishes that he were home again. He does not believe, of course, in those "spirits of the storm," about whom he has so often written, any more than he does in a great deal of his fine imagery; but still, in such characters as his, the sympathy

between the moods of nature and those of the mind is most real and important; and Dame Nature's equinoctial night-wrath is weird, grewsome, crushing and can be faced—if it must be faced—in real comfort only when one is going on an errand of mercy, with a clear conscience, a light heart, a good cigar, and plenty of Mackintosh.

So, ere Elsley had gone a quarter of a mile, he turned back, and resolved to go in, and take up his book once more. Perhaps Lucia might beg his pardon; and, if not, why, perhaps he might beg hers. The rain was washing the spirit out of him as it does out of a thin-coated horse.

Stay! What was that sound above the roar of the gale?—a cannon?

He listened, turning his head right and left to escape the howling of the wind in his ears. A minute, and another boom rose and rang aloft. It was near, too. He almost fancied that he felt the concussion of the air.

Another and another; and then, in the village below, he could see lights hurrying to and fro. A wreck at sea? He turned again up the lane. He had never seen a wreck. What an opportunity for a poet; and on such a night too! it would be magnificent if the moon would but come out! Just the scene, too, for his excited temper! He will work on upward, let it blow and rain as it may. He is not

disappointed. Ere he has gone a hundred yards, a mass of dripping oil-skin runs full butt against him, knocking him against the bank; and, by the clank of weapons, he recognizes the coast-guard watchman.

"Hillo!—who's that? Beg your pardon, sir," as the man recognizes Elsley's voice.

"What is it?—what are the guns?"

"God knows, sir! Over right the Chough and Crow; on 'em, I'm afeard. There they go again!—hard up, poor souls! God help them!" and the man runs shouting down the lane.

Another gun, and another; but, long ere Elsley reaches the cliff, they are silent; and nothing is to be heard but the noise of the storm, which, loud as it was below among the wood, is almost intolerable now that he is on the open down.

He struggles up the lane toward the cliff, and there pauses, gasping, under the shelter of a wall, trying to analyze that enormous mass of sound which fills his ears and brain, and flows through his heart like maddening wine. He can hear the sigh of the dead grass on the cliff-edge, weary, feeble, expostulating with its old tormentor the gale; then the fierce screams of the blasts as they rush up across the layers of rock below, like hounds leaping up at their prey; and, far beneath, the horrible confused battle-roar of that great leaguer of waves. He cannot see

them, as he strains his eyes over the wall into the black depth,—nothing but a confused welter and quiver of mingled air, and rain, and spray, as if the very atmosphere is writhing in the clutches of the gale; but he can hear,—what can he not hear? It would have needed a less vivid brain than Elsley's to fancy another Badajos beneath. There it all is: the rush of columns to the breach, officers cheering them on; pauses, breaks, wild retreats, upbraiding calls, whispering consultations, fresh rush on rush, now here, now there; fierce shouts above, below, behind; shrieks of agony, choked groans and gasps of dying men, scaling-ladders hurled down with all their rattling freight; dull mine-explosions, ringing cannon-thunder, as the old fortress blasts back its besiegers pell-mell into the deep. It is all there; truly enough there, at least, to madden yet more Elsley's wild, angry brain, till he tries to add his shouts to the great battle-cries of land and sea, and finds them as little audible as an infant's wail.

Suddenly, far below him, a bright glimmer; and, in a moment, a blue light reveals the whole scene, in ghastly hues, blue leaping breakers, blue welter-ing sheets of foam, blue rocks, crowded with blue figures, like ghosts, flitting to and fro upon the brink of that blue seething Phlegethon, and rushing up to-ward him through the air, a thousand flying blue foam-sponges, which dive over the brow of the hill

and vanish, like delicate fairies fleeing before the wrath of the gale;—but where is the wreck? The blue light cannot pierce the gray veil of mingled mist and spray which hangs to seaward; and her guns have been silent for half an hour and more.

Elsley hurries down, and finds half the village collected on the long sloping point of down below. Sailors wrapt in pilot-cloth, oil-skinned coast-guardsmen, women with their gowns turned over their heads, staggering restlessly up and down, and in and out, while every moment some fresh comer stumbles down the slope, thrusting himself into his clothes as he goes, and asks, "Where's the wreck?" and gets no answer but a surly advice to "hold his noise," as if they had hope of hearing the wreck which they cannot see; and kind women, with their hearts full of mother's instincts, declare that they can hear little children crying, and are pooh-poohed down by kind men who, man's fashion, don't like to believe anything too painful, or, if they believe it, to talk of it.

"Where were the guns from, then, Jones?" asks the lieutenant of the head boatman.

"Off the Chough and Crow, I thought, sir. God grant not!"

"You thought, sir?" says the great man, willing to vent his vexation on some one. "Why didn't you make sure?"

"Why just look, lieutenant," says Jones, pointing

into the "black height of the dark;" "and I was on the pier too, and couldn't see; but the look-out man here says—" A shift of wind, a drift of cloud, and the moon flashes out a moment. "There she is sir!"

Some three hundred yards out at sea lies a long curved black line, beautiful, severe, and still, amid those white wild leaping hills. A murmur from the crowd, which swells into a roar, as they surge aimlessly up and down.

Another moment, and it is cut in two by a white line—covered—lost—all hold their breaths. No; the sea passes on, and still the black curve is there, enduring.

"A terrible big ship!"

"A Liverpool clipper, by the lines of her."

"God help the poor passengers, then!" sobs a woman. "They're past our help; she's on her beam-ends."

"And her deck upright toward us."

"Silence! Out of the way, you loafing long-shores!" shouts the lieutenant. "Jones,—the rockets!"

What though the lieutenant be somewhat given to strong liquors, and stronger language? He wears the Queen's uniform; and what is more, he knows his work, and can do it. All make a silent ring while the fork is planted; the lieutenant, throwing away the end of his cigar, kneels and adjusts the

stick; Jones and his mates examine and shake out the coils of line.

Another minute, and the magnificent creature rushes forth with a triumphant roar, and soars aloft over the waves in a long stream of fire, defiant of the gale.

Is it over her? No! A fierce gust, which all but hurls the spectators to the ground; the fiery stream sweeps away to the left, in a grand curve of sparks, and drops into the sea.

"Try it again!" shouts the lieutenant, his blood now up. "We'll see which will beat, wind or powder."

Again a rocket is fixed, with more allowance for the wind; but the black curve has disappeared, and he must wait awhile.

"There it is again! Fly swift and sure," cries Elsley, "thou fiery angel of mercy, bearing the saviour-line! It may not be too late yet."

Full and true the rocket went across her; and "three cheers for the lieutenant!" rose above the storm.

"Silence, lads! Not so bad, though," says he, rubbing his wet hands. "Hold on by the line, and watch for a bite, Jones."

Five minutes pass. Jones has the line in his hand, waiting for any signal touch from the ship; but the line sways limp in the surge.

Ten minutes. The lieutenant lights a fresh cigar, and paces up and down, smoking fiercely.

A quarter of an hour; and yet no response. The moon is shining clearly now. They can see her hatchways, the stumps of her masts, great tangles of rigging swaying and lashing down across her deck; but that delicate black upper curve is becoming more ragged after every wave; and the tide is rising fast.

"There's a pull!" shouts Jones. . . . "No there aint! . . . God have mercy, sir! She's going!"

The black curve boils up as if a mine had been sprung on board; leaps into arches, jagged peaks, black bars crossed and tangled; and then all melts away into the white seething waste while the line floats home helplessly, as if disappointed; and the billows plunge more sullenly and sadly toward the shore, as if in remorse for their dark and reckless deed.

All is over. What shall we do now? Go home and pray that God may have mercy on all drowning souls! Or think what a picturesque and tragical scene it was, and what a beautiful poem it will make, when we have thrown it into an artistic form, and bedizened it with conceits and analogies stolen from all heaven and earth by our own self-willed fancy?

Elsley Vavasour—through whose spectacles, rather

than with my own eyes, I have been looking at the wreck, and to whose account, not to mine, the metaphors and similes of the last two pages must be laid —took the latter course; not that he was not awed, calmed, and even humbled, as he felt how poor and petty his own troubles were, compared with that great tragedy; but, in his fatal habit of considering all matters in heaven and earth as bricks and mortar for the poet to build with, he considered that he had "seen enough;" as if men were sent into the world to see, and not to act; and going home too excited to sleep, much more to go and kiss forgiveness to his sleeping wife, sat up all night writing "The Wreck," which may be (as the reviewer in "The Parthenon" asserts) an exquisite poem; but I cannot say that it is of much importance.

So the delicate genius sat that night, scribbling verses by a warm fire, and the rough lieutenant settled himself down in his Mackintoshes, to sit out those weary hours on the bare rock, having done all that he could do, and yet knowing that his duty was, not to leave the place as long as there was a chance of saving—not a life, for that was past all hope—but a chest of clothes, or a stick of timber. There he settled himself, grumbling, yet faithful; and filled up the time with sleepy maledictions against some old admiral who had—or had not—taken a spite to him in the West Indies thirty years before,

else he would have been a post captain by now, comfortable in bed on board a crack frigate, instead of sitting all night out on a rock, like an old cormorant, etc., etc. Who knows not the woes of ancient coast-guard lieutenants?

But, as it befell, Elsley Vavasour was justly punished for going home, by losing the most "poetical" incident of the whole night.

For with the coast-guardsmen many sailors stayed. There was nothing to be earned by staying; but still who knew but they might be wanted? And they hung on with the same feeling which tempts one to linger round a grave ere the earth is filled in, loth to give up the last sight, and with it the last hope. The ship herself, over and above her lost crew, was in their eyes a person, to be loved and regretted. And gentleman Jan spoke, like a true sailor:

"Ah, poor dear! And she such a beauty, Mr. Jones; as any one might see by her lines, even that way off. Ah, poor dear!"

"And so many brave souls on board; and perhaps, some of them not ready, Mr. Beer," says the serious elderly chief boatman. "Eh, Captain Willis?"

"The Lord has had mercy on them, I don't doubt," answers the old man, in his quiet sweet voice. "One can't but hope that he would give them time for one prayer before all was over; and

having been drowned myself, Mr. Jones, three times, and taken up for dead,—that is once in Gibraltar bay, and once when I was a total wreck in the old Seahorse, that was in the hurricane in the Indies; after that, when I fell over quay-head here, fishing for bass,—why, I know well how quick the prayer will run through a man's heart, when he's a drowning, and the light of conscience, too, all one's life in one minute, like—"

"It arn't the men I care for," says gentleman Jan; "they're gone to heaven, like all brave sailors do as dies by wrack and battle; but the poor, dear ship, d'ye see, Captain Willis, she han't no heaven to go to, and that's why I feels for her so."

Both the old men shake their heads at Jan's doctrine, and turn the subject off.

"You'd better go home, captain, 'fear of the rheumatics. It's a rough night for your years; and you've no call, like me."

"I would, but for my maid there; and I can't get her home; and I can't leave her." And Willis points to the schoolmistress, who sits upon the flat slope of a rock, a little apart ftom the rest, with her face resting on her hands, gazing intently out into the wild waste.

"Make her go; it's her duty—we all have our duties. Why does her mother let her out at this time of night? I keep my maids tighter than that,

I warrant." And disciplinarian Mr. Jones makes a step towards her.

"Ah, Mr. Jones, don't now! She's not one of us. There's no saying what's going on there in her. Maybe she's praying; maybe she sees more than we do, over the sea there."

"What do you mean? There's no living body in those breakers be sure!"

"There's more living things about on such a night than have bodies to them, or than any but such as she can see. If any one ever talked with angels, that maid does; and I've heard her, too; I can say I have—certain of it. Those that like may call her an innocent; but I wish I were such an innocent, Mr. Jones. I'd be nearer heaven then, here on earth, than I fear sometimes I ever shall be, even after I'm dead and gone."

"Well, she's a good girl, mazed or not; but look at her now! What's she after?"

The girl had raised her head, and was pointing, with one arm stretched stiffly out, toward the sea.

Old Willis went down to her, and touched her gently on the shoulder.

"Come home, my maid, then; you'll take cold, indeed;" but she did not move or lower her arm.

The old man, accustomed to her fits of fixed melancholy, looked down under her bonnet, to see whether she was "past," as he called it. By the

moonlight he could see her great eyes steady and wide open. She motioned him away, half impatiently, and then sprang to her feet with a scream.

"A man! a man! Save him!"

As she spoke, a huge wave rolled in, and shot up the sloping end of the point in a broad sheet of foam. And out of it struggled, on hands and knees, a human figure. He looked wildly up, and round, and then his head dropped again on his breast; and he lay clinging with outspread arms, like Homer's polypus in the Odyssey, as the wave drained back in a thousand roaring cataracts, over the edge of the rock.

"Save him!" shrieked she again, as twenty men rushed forward—and stopped short. The man was fully thirty yards from them; but close to him, between them and him, stretched a long ghastly crack, some ten feet wide, cutting the point across. All knew it; its slippery edge, its polished upright sides, the seething caldrons within it; and knew, too, that the next wave would boil up from it in a hundred jets, and suck in the strongest to his doom, to fall, with brains dashed out, into a chasm from which was no return.

Ere they could nerve themselves for action, the wave had come. Up the slope it swept, one half of it burying the wretched mariner, and fell over into the chasm. The other half rushed up the chasm

itself, and spouted forth again to the moonlight in columns of snow, in time to meet the wave from which it had just parted, as it fell from above; and then the two boiled up, and round, and over, and swirled along the smooth rock to their very feet.

The schoolmistress took one long look, and, as the wave retired, rushed after it to the brink of the chasm, and flung herself on her knees.

"She's mazed!"

"No she's not!" almost screamed old Willis, in mingled pride and terror, as he rushed after her. "The wave has carried him across the crack, and she's got him!" And he sprang upon her, and caught her round the waist.

"Now, if you be men!" shouted he, as the rest hurried down.

"Now, if you be men; before the next wave comes!" shouted big Jan. "Hands together, and make a line!" And he took a grip with one hand of the old man's waistband, and held out the other hand for who would to seize.

Who took it? Frank Headley, the curate, who had been watching all sadly, apart, longing to do something which no one could mistake.

"Be you man enough?" asked big Jan, doubtfully.

"Try," said Frank.

"Really, you ben't, sir," said Jan, civilly enough.

"Means no offence, sir; your heart's stout enough, I see; but you don't know what it'll be." And he caught the hand of a huge fellow next him, while Frank shrank sadly back into the darkness.

Strong hand after hand was clasped, and strong knee after knee dropped almost to the rock, to meet the coming rush of water; and all who knew their business took a long breath,—they might have need of one.

It came, and surged over the man, and the girl, and up to old Willis's throat, and round the knees of Jan and his neighbor; and then followed the returning out-draught, and every limb quivered with the strain; but when the cataract had disappeared, the chain was still unbroken.

"Saved!" and a cheer broke from all the lips, save those of the girl herself. She was as senseless as he whom she had saved. They hurried her and him up the rock ere another wave could come; but they had much ado to open her hands, so firmly clenched together were they round his waist.

Gently they lifted each, and laid them on the rock; while old Willis, having recovered his breath, set to work, crying like a child, to restore breath to "his maiden."

"Run for Dr. Heale, some good Christian!" But Frank, longing to escape from a company who did not love him, and to be of some use ere the night

was out, was already half way to the village on that very errand.

However, ere the doctor could be stirred out of his boozy slumbers, and thrust into his clothes by his wife, the schoolmistress was safe in bed at her mother's house; and the man, weak, but alive, carried triumphantly up to Heale's door; which having been kicked open, the sailors insisted in carrying him right upstairs, and depositing him on the best spare bed.

"If you won't come to your patients, doctor, your patients shall come to you. Why were you asleep in your liquors, instead of looking out for poor wretches, like a Christian? You see whether his bones be broke, and gi'un his medicines proper and then go and see after the schoolmistress; she'm worth a dozen of any man, and a thousand of you. We'll pay for 'un like men; and if you don't we'll break every bottle in your shop."

To which, what between bodily fear and real good-nature old Heale assented; and so ended that eventful night.

WESTWARD HO!

WESTWARD HO!

EVERY one who knows Bideford cannot but know Bideford Bridge; for it is the very omphalos. cynosure, and soul, around which the town, as a body, has organized itself; and as Edinburgh is Edinburgh by virtue of its castle, Rome Rome by virtue of its capitol, and Egypt Egypt by virtue of its Pyramids, so is Bideford, Bideford, by virtue of its Bridge. But all do not know the occult powers which have advanced and animated the said wondrous bridge for now five hundred years, and made it the chief wonder, according to Prince and Fuller, of this fair land of Devon: being first an inspired bridge; a soul-saving bridge; an alms-giving bridge; an educational bridge; a sentient bridge; and last, but not least, a dinner-giving bridge. All do not know how, when it began to be built some half mile higher up, hands invisible carried the stones down stream each night to the present site; until Sir Richard Gurney, parson of the parish, going to bed one night in sore perplexity and fear of the evil spirit who

seemed so busy in the sheepfold, beheld a vision of an angel, who bade build the bridge where he himself had so kindly transported the materials; for there alone was sure foundation amid the broad sheet of shifting sand. All do not know how Bishop Grandison of Exeter proclaimed throughout his diocese indulgences, benedictions, and "participation in all spiritual blessings forever," to all who would promote the bridging of that dangerous ford; and so, consulting alike the interests of their souls and of their bodies, "make the best of both worlds."

All do not know, nor do I that "though the foundation of the bridge is laid upon wood, yet it shakes at the slightest step of a horse;" or that, "though it has twenty-three arches, yet one William Alford (another Milo) carried on his back for a wager four bushels salt-water measure, all the length thereof;" or that the bridge is a veritable esquire, bearing arms of its own (a ship and bridge proper on a plain field), and owning lands and tenements in many parishes, with which the said miraculous bridge has, from time to time, founded charities, built schools, waged suits at law, and finally (for this concerns us most) given yearly dinners, and kept for that purpose (luxuriously and liquorish bridge that it was) the best stocked cellar of wines in all Devon.

To one of these dinners, as it happened, were invited in the year 1583 all the notabilities of Bideford,

and beside them Mr. St. Leger of Annery close by, brother of the Marshal of Munster, and of Lady Grenvile; a most worthy and hospitable gentleman, who, finding riches a snare, parted with them so freely to all his neighbors as long as he lived, that he effectually prevented his children after him from falling into the temptations thereunto incident.

Between him and one of the bridge trustees arose an argument, whether a salmon caught below the bridge was better or worse than one caught above; and as that weighty question could only be decided by practical experiment, Mr. St. Leger vowed that as the bridge had given him a good dinner, he would give the bridge one; offered a bet of five pounds that he would find them, out of the pool below Annery, as firm and flaky a salmon as the Appledore one which they had just eaten; and then, in the fulness of his heart, invited the whole company present to dine with him at Annery three days after, and bring with them each a wife or a daughter; and Don Guzman being at table, he was invited, too.

So there was a mighty feast in the great hall at Annery, such as had seldom been since Judge Hankford feasted Edward the Fourth there; and while everyone was eating their best and drinking their worst, Rose Salterne and Don Guzman were pretending not to see each other, and watching each other all the more. But Rose, at least, had to be

very careful of her glances; for not only was her father at the table, but just opposite her sat none other than Messrs. William Carey and Arthur St. Leger, lieutenants in her Majesty's Irish army, who had returned on furlough a few days before.

Rose Salterne and the Spaniard had not exchanged a word in the last six months, though they had met many times. The Spaniard by no means avoided her company, except in her father's house; he only took care to obey her carefully, by seeming always unconscious of her presence, beyond the stateliest of salutes at entering and departing. But he took care, at the same time, to lay himself out to the very best advantage whenever he was in her presence; to be more witty, more eloquent, more romantic, more full of wonderful tales than he ever had yet been. The cunning Don had found himself foiled in his first tactic; and he was now trying another, and a far more formidable one. In the first place, Rose deserved a very severe punishment, for having dared to refuse the love of a Spanish nobleman; and what greater punishment could he inflict than withdrawing the honor of his attentions, and the sunshine of his smiles? There was conceit enough in that notion, but there was cunning, too; for none knew better than the Spaniard, that women, like the world, are pretty sure to value a man (especially if there be any real worth in him) at his own price; and that the

more he demands for himself, the more they will give for him.

And now he would put a high price on himself, and pique her pride, as she was too much accustomed to worship, to be won by flattering it. He might have done that by paying attention to some one else: but he was too wise to employ so coarse a method, which might raise indignation, or disgust, or despair in Rose's heart, but would have never brought her to his feet—as it will never bring any woman worth bringing. So he quietly and unobtrusively showed her that he could do without her; and she, poor fool, as she was meant to do, began forthwith to ask herself—why? What was the hidden treasure, what was the reserve force, which made him independent of her, while she could not say that she was independent of him? Had he a secret? how pleasant to know it! Some huge ambition? how pleasant to share in it! Some mysterious knowledge? how pleasant to learn it! Some capacity of love beyond the common? how delicious to have it all for her own! He must be greater, wiser, richer-hearted than she was, as well as better-born. Ah, if his wealth would but supply her poverty! And so, step by step, she was being led to sue in formâ pauperis to the very man whom she had spurned when he sued in like form to her. That temptation of having some mysterious private treasure, of being

the priestess of some hidden sanctuary, and being able to thank Heaven that she was not as other women are, was becoming fast too much for Rose, as it is too much for most. For none knew better than the Spaniard how much more fond women are, by the very law of their sex, of worshipping than of being worshipped, and of obeying than of being obeyed; how their coyness, often their scorn, is but a mask to hide their consciousness of weakness; and a mask, too, of which they themselves will often be the first to tire.

And Rose was utterly tired of that same mask as she sat at table at Annery that day; and Don Guzman saw it in her uneasy and downcast looks, and thinking (conceited coxcomb) that she must be by now sufficiently punished, stole a glance at her now and then, and was not abashed when he saw that she dropped her eyes when they met his, because he saw her silence and abstraction increase, and something like a blush steal into her cheeks. So he pretended to be as much downcast and abstracted as she was, and went on with his glances, till he once found her, poor thing looking at him to see if he was looking at her; and then he knew his prey was safe, and asked her, with his eyes, "Do you forgive me?" and saw her stop dead in her talk to her next neighbor, and falter, and drop her eyes, and raise them again after a minute in search of his, that he might

repeat the pleasant question. And then what could she do but answer with all her face and every bend of her pretty neck, "And do you forgive me in turn?"

Whereon Don Guzman broke out jubilant, like nightingale on bough, with story, and jest, and repartee; and became forthwith the soul of the whole company, and the most charming of all cavaliers. And poor Rose knew that she was the cause of his sudden change of mood, and blamed herself for what she had done, and shuddered and blushed at her own delight, and longed that the feast was over that she might hurry home and hide herself alone with sweet fancies about a love the reality of which she felt she dared not face.

It was a beautiful sight, the great terrace at Annery that afternoon; with the smart dames in their gaudy dresses parading up and down in twos and threes before the stately house; or looking down upon the park, with the old oaks, and the deer, and the broad land-locked river spread out like a lake beneath, all bright in the glare of the midsummer sun; or listening obsequiously to the two great ladies who did the honors, Mrs. St. Leger the hostess, and her sister-in-law, fair Lady Grenville. All chatted, and laughed, and eyed each other's dresses, and gossiped about each other's husbands and servants: only Rose Salterne kept apart, and longed to get into a corner and laugh or cry. she knew not which.

"Our pretty Rose seems sad," said Lady Grenvile, coming up to her. "Cheer up, child! we want you to come and sing to us."

Rose answered she knew not what, and obeyed mechanically.

She took the lute, and sat down on a bench beneath the house while the rest grouped themselves round her.

"What shall I sing?"

"Let us have your old song, 'Earl Haldan's Daughter.'"

Rose shrank from it. It was a loud and dashing ballad, which chimed in but little with her thoughts; and Frank had praised it too, in happier days long since gone by. She thought of him, and of others and of her pride and carelessness; and the song seemed ominous to her; and yet for that very reason she dared not refuse to sing it, for fear of suspicion where no one suspected; and so she began perforce—

I.

"It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She look'd across the sea;
She look'd across the water,
And long and loud laugh'd she;
'The locks of six princesses
Must be my marriage-fee,
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Who comes a wooing me?'

2.

" It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She walk'd along the sand;
When she was aware of a knight so fair,
Come sailing to the land.
His sails were all of velvet,
His mast of beaten gold,
And 'hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat,
Who saileth here so bold?'

3.

"'The locks of five princesses
I won beyond the sea;
I shore their golden tresses,
To fringe a cloak for thee.
One handful yet is wanting,
But one of all the tale;
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Furl up thy velvet sail!'

4.

" He leaped into the water,
That rover young and bold;
He griped Earl Haldan's daughter.
He shore her locks of gold;
'Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,
The tale is full to-day.
Now hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Sail Westward-ho, and away!' "

As she ceased, a measured voice, with a foreign accent, thrilled through her.

"In the East, they say the nightingale sings to the rose; Devon, more happy, has nightingale and rose in one."

"We have no nightingales in Devon, Don Guzman," said Lady Grenvile; "but our little forest thrushes sing, as you hear, sweetly enough to content any ear. But what brings you away from the gentlemen so early?"

"These letters," said he, "which have just been put into my hand; and as they call me home to Spain, I was loth to lose a moment of that delightful company from which I must part so soon."

"To Spain?" asked half-a-dozen voices: for the Don was a general favorite.

"Yes, and thence to the Indies. My ransom has arrived, and with it the promise of an office. I am to be Governor of La Guayra in Caraccas. Congratulate me on my promotion."

A mist was over Rose's eyes. The Spaniard's voice was hard and flippant. Did he care for her after all? And if he did, was it nevertheless hopeless? How her cheeks glowed! Everybody must see it! Anything to turn away their attention from her, and in that nervous haste which makes people speak, and speak foolishly too, just because they ought to be silent, she asked—

"And where is La Guayra?"

"Half round the world, on the coast of the Spanish Main. The loveliest place on earth, and the loveliest governor's house, in a forest of palms at the foot of a mountain eight thousand feet high: I shall only want a wife there to be in paradise."

"I don't doubt that you may persuade some fair lady of Seville to accompany you thither," said Lady Grenvile.

"Thanks, gracious Madam: but the truth is, that since I have had the bliss of knowing English ladies, I have begun to think that they are the only ones on earth worth wooing."

"A thousand thanks for the compliment; but I fear none of our free English maidens would like to submit to the guardianship of a duenna. Eh, Rose? how should you like to be kept under lock and key all day by an ugly old woman with a horn on her forehead?"

Poor Rose turned so scarlet that Lady Grenvile knew her secret on the spot, and would have tried to turn the conversation: but before she could speak, some burgher's wife blundered out a commonplace about the jealousy of Spanish husbands; and another, to make matters better, giggled out something more true than delicate about West Indian masters and fair slaves.

"Ladies," said Don Guzman, reddening, "believe

me that these are but the calumnies of ignorance. If we be more jealous than other nations, it is because we love more passionately. If some of us abroad are profligate, it is because they, poor men, have no helpmate, which, like the amethyst, keeps its wearer pure. I could tell you stories, ladies, of the constancy and devotion of Spanish husbands, even in the Indies, as strange as ever romancer invented."

"Can you? Then we challenge you to give us one at least."

"I fear it would be too long, Madam."

"The longer the more pleasant, Señor. How can we spend an hour better this afternoon, while the gentlemen within are finishing their wine?"

Story-telling, in those old times, when books (and authors also, lucky for the public) were rarer than now, was a common amusement; and as the Spaniard's accomplishments in that line were well known, all the ladies crowded round him; the servants brought chairs and benches; and Don Guzman, taking his seat in the midst, with a proud humility, at Lady Grenvile's feet, began—

"Your perfections, fair and illustrious ladies, must doubtless have heard, ere now, how Sebastian Cabota, some-forty-five years ago, sailed forth with a commission from my late master, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, to discover the golden lands of Tarshish, Ophir, and Cipango; but being in want of

provisions, stopped short at the mouth of that mighty South American river to which he gave the name of Rio de la Plata, and sailing up it, discovered the fair land of Paraguay. But you may not have heard how, on the bank of that river, at the mouth of the Rio Terceiro, he built a fort which men still call Cabot's Tower; nor have you, perhaps, heard of the strange tale which will ever make the tower a sacred spot to all true lovers.

"For when he returned to Spain the year after, he left in his tower a garrison of a hundred and twenty-men, under the command of Nuño de Lara, Ruiz Moschera, and Sebastian da Hurtado, old friends and fellow-soldiers of my invincible grandfather Don Ferdinando do Soto; and with them a jewel, than which Spain never possessed one more precious, Lucia Miranda, the wife of Hurtado, who, famed in the Court of the Emperor no less for her wisdom and modesty than for her unrivaled beauty, had thrown up all the pomp and ambition of a palace, to marry a poor adventurer, and to encounter with him the hardships of a voyage round the world. Mangora, the Cacique of the neighboring Timbuez Indians (with whom Lara had contrived to establish a friendship), cast his eyes on this fair creature, and no sooner saw than he coveted; no sooner coveted than he plotted, with the devilish subtilty of a savage, to seize by force what he knew he could never

gain by right. She soon found out his passion (she was wise enough—what every woman is not—to know when she is loved), and telling her husband, kept as much as she could out of her new lover's sight; while the savage pressed Hurtado to come and visit him, and to bring his lady with him. Hurtado, suspecting the snare, and yet fearing to offend the Cacique, excused himself courteously on the score of his soldier's duty; and the savage, mad with desire and disappointment, began plotting against Hurtado's life.

"So went on several weeks, till food grew scarce, and Don Hurtado and Don Ruiz Moschera, with fifty soldiers, were sent up the river on a foraging party. Mangora saw his opportunity, and leaped at it forthwith.

"The tower, ladies, as I have heard from those who have seen it, stands on a knoll at the meeting of the two rivers, while on the land side stretches a dreary marsh, covered with tall grass and bushes; a fit place for the ambuscade of four thousand Indians, which Mangora, with devilish cunning, placed around the tower, while he himself went boldly up to it, followed by thirty men, laden with grain, fruit, game, and all the delicacies which his forests could afford.

"There, with a smiling face, he told the unsuspecting Lara his sorrow for the Spaniard's want of food;

besought him to accept the provision he had brought, and was, as he had expected, invited by Lara to come in and taste the wines of Spain.

"In went he and his thirty fellow-bandits, and the feast continued, with songs and libations, far into the night, while Mangora often looked round, and at last boldly asked for the fair Miranda; but she had shut herself into her lodging, pleading illness.

"A plea, fair ladies, which little availed that hapless dame; for no sooner had the Spaniards retired to rest, leaving (by I know not what madness) Mangora and his Indians within, than they were awakened by the cry of fire, the explosion of their magazine, and the inward rush of the four thousand from the marsh outside.

"Why pain your gentle ears with details of slaughter? A few fearful minutes sufficed to exterminate my bewildered and unarmed countrymen, to bind the only survivors, Miranda (innocent cause of the whole tragedy) and four other women with their infants, and to lead them away in triumph across the forest towards the Indian town.

"Stunned by the suddenness of the evils which had passed, and still more by the thought of those worse which were to come (as she too well foresaw), Miranda traveled all night through the forest, and was brought in triumph at day-dawn before the Indian king to receive her doom. Judge of her astonish-

ment, when, on looking up, she saw that he was not Mangora.

"A ray of hope flashed across her, and she asked where he was.

"'He was slain last night,' said the king; 'and I his brother Siripa, am now Cacique of the Timbuez.'

"It was true; Lara, maddened with drink, rage and wounds, had caught up his sword, rushed up into the thick of the fight, singled out the traitor, and slain him on the spot; and then forgetting safety in revenge, had continued to plunge his sword into the corpse, heedless of the blows of the savages, till he fell pierced with a hundred wounds.

"A ray of hope, as I said, flashed across the wretched Miranda for a moment; but the next she found that she had been freed from one bandit only to be delivered to another.

"'Yes,' said the new king in broken Spanish; 'my brother played a bold stake, and lost it; but it was well worth the risk, and he showed his wisdom thereby. You cannot be his queen now: you must content yourself with being mine.'

"Miranda, desperate, answered him with every fierce taunt which she could invent against his treachery and his crime; and asked him, how he came to dream that the wife of a Christian Spaniard would condescend to become the mistress of a heathen savage; hoping, unhappy lady, to exasperate him into

killing her on the spot. But in vain; she only prolonged thereby her own misery. For, whether it was, ladies, that the novel sight of divine virtue and beauty awed (as it may have awed me ere now), where it had just before maddened; or whether some dream crossed the savage (as it may have crossed me ere now), that he could make the wisdom of a mortal angel help his ambition, as well as her beauty his happiness; or whether (which I will never believe of one of those dark children of the devil, though I can boldly assert it of myself) some spark of boldness within him made him too proud to take by force what he could not win by persuasion, certain it is, as the Indians themselves confessed afterwards, that the savage only answered her by smiles; and bidding his men unbind her, told her that she was no slave of his, and that it only lay with her to become the sovereign of him and all his vassals: assigned her a hut to herself, loaded her with savage ornaments, and for several weeks treated her with no less courtesy (so miraculous is the power of love) than if he had been a cavalier of Castile.

"Three months and more, ladies, as I have heard, passed in this misery, and every day Miranda grew more desperate of all deliverance, and saw staring her in the face, nearer and nearer some hideous and shameful end; when one day going down with the wives of the Cacique to draw water in the river, she

saw on the opposite bank a white man in a tattered Spanish dress, with a drawn sword in his hand; who had no sooner espied her, than shrieking her name, he plunged into the stream, swam across, landed at her feet, and clasped her in his arms. It was no other, ladies, incredible as it may seem, than Don Sebastian himself, who had returned with Ruiz Moschera to the tower, and found it only a charred and blood-stained heap of ruins.

"He guessed by inspiration, what had passed, and whither his lady was gone; and without a thought of danger, like a true Spanish gentleman, and a true Spanish lover, darted off alone into the forest, and guided only by the inspiration of his own loyal heart, found again his treasure, and found it still unstained and his own.

"Who can describe the joy, and who again the terror, of their meeting? The Indian women had fled in fear, and for the short ten minutes that the lovers were left together, life to be sure, was one long kiss. But what to do they knew not. To go inland was to rush into the enemy's arms. He would have swum with her across the river, and attempted it; but his strength, worn out with hunger and travel, failed him; he drew her with difficulty on shore again, and sat down by her to await their doom with prayer, the first and last resource of virtuous ladies, as weapons are of cavaliers.

"Alas for them! May no true lovers ever have to weep over joys so soon lost, after having been so hardly found! For, ere a quarter of an hour was passed, the Indian women, who had fled at his approach, returned with all the warriors of the tribe. Don Sebastian, desperate, would fain have slain his wife and himself on the spot; but his hand sank again—and whose would not but an Indian's?—as he raised it against that fair and faithful breast; in a few minutes he was surrounded, seized from behind, disarmed, and carried in triumph into the village. And if you cannot feel for him in that misery, fair ladies, who have known no sorrow, yet I, a prisoner, can."

Don Guzman paused a moment, as if overcome by emotion; and I will not say that, as he paused, he did not look to see if Rose Salterne's eyes were on him, as indeed they were.

"Yes, I can feel with him; I can estimate better than you, ladies, the greatness of that love which could submit to captivity; to the loss of his sword; to the loss of that honor, which, next to God and his mother, is the true Spaniard's deity. There are those who have suffered that shame at the hands of valiant gentlemen" (and again Don Guzman looked up at Rose), "and yet would have sooner died a thousand deaths; but he dared to endure it from the hands of villains, savages, heathens; for he was a true Spaniard, and therefore a true lover; but I will go on with my tale.

"This wretched pair, then, as I have been told by Ruiz Moschera himself, stood together before the Cacique. He, like a true child of the devil, comprehending in a moment who Don Sebastian was, laughed with delight at seeing his rival in his power, and bade bind him at once to a tree, and shoot him to death with arrows.

"But the poor Miranda sprang forward, and threw herself at his feet, and with piteous entreaties besought for mercy from him who knew no mercy.

"And yet love and the sight of her beauty, and the terrible eloquence of her words, while she invoked on his head the just vengeance of Heaven, wrought even on his heart: nevertheless the pleasure of seeing her, who had so long scorned him, a suppliant at his feet, was too delicate to be speedily forgone; and not till she was all but blind with tears, and dumb with agony of pleading, did he make answer, that if she would consent to become his wife, her husband's life should be spared. She, in her haste and madness, sobbed out desperately I know not what consent. Don Sebastian, who understood, if not the language, still the meaning (so had love quickened his understanding), shrieked to her not to lose her precious soul for the sake of his worthless body; that death was nothing compared to the horror of that shame; and such other words as became a noble and valiant gentleman. She, shuddering

now at her own frailty, would have recalled her promise; but Siripa kept her to it, vowing, if she disappointed him again, such a death to her husband as made her blood run cold to hear of; and the wretched woman could only escape for the present by some story, that it was not the custom of her race to celebrate nuptials till a month after the betrothment; that the anger of Heaven would be on her, unless she first performed in solitude certain religious rites; and lastly, that if he dared to lay hands on her husband, she would die so resolutely, that every drop of water should be deep enough to drown her, every thorn sharp enough to stab her to the heart: till fearing lest by demanding too much he should lose all, and awed too, as he had been at first, by a voice and looks which seemed to be, in comparison with his own, divine, Siripa bade her go back to her hut, promising her husband life; but promising too, that if he ever found the two speaking together. even for a moment, he would pour out on them both all the cruelty of those tortures in which the devil, their father, has so perfectly instructed the Indians.

"So Don Sebastian, being stripped of his garments, and painted after the Indian fashion, was set to all mean and toilsome work, amid the buffetings and insults of the whole village. And this, ladies, he endured without a murmur, aye, took delight in

enduring it, as he would have endured things worse a thousand times, only for the sake, like a true lover as he was, of being near the goddess whom he worshipped, and of seeing her now and then afar off, happy enough to be repaid even by that for all indignities.

"And yet, you who have loved may well guess, as I can, that ere a week had passed, Don Sebastian and the Lady Miranda had found means, in spite of all spiteful eyes, to speak to each other once and again; and to assure each other of their love; even to talk of escape, before the month's grace should be expired. And Miranda, whose heart was full of courage as long as she felt her husband near her, went so far as to plan a means of escape which seemed possible and hopeful.

"For the youngest wife of the Cacique, who, till Miranda's coming, had been his favorite, often talked with the captive, insulting and tormenting her in her spite and jealousy, and receiving in return only gentle and conciliatory words. And one day when the woman had been threatening to kill her, Miranda took courage to say, 'Do you fancy that I shall not be as glad to be rid of your husband, as you to be rid of me? Why kill me needlessly, when all that you require is to get me forth of the place? Out of sight, out of mind. When I am gone, your husband will soon forget me, and you will be his

favorite as before.' Soon, seeing that the girl was inclined to listen, she went on to tell her of her love to Don Sebastian, entreating and abjuring her, by the love which she bore the Cacique, to pity and help her; and so won upon the girl that she consented to be privy to Miranda's escape, and even offered to give her an opportunity of speaking to her husband about it; and at last was so won over by Miranda, that she consented to keep all intruders out of the way, while Don Sebastian that very night visited Miranda in her hut.

"The hapless husband, thirsting for his love, was in that hut, be sure, the moment that kind darkness covered his steps:—and what cheer these two made of each other, when they once found themselves together, lovers must fancy for themselves; but so it was, that after many a leave-taking, there was no departure; and when the night was well-nigh past, Sebastian and Miranda were still talking together, as if they had never met before and would never meet again.

"But it befell, ladies (would that I was not speaking the truth, but inventing, that I might have invented something merrier for your ears), it befell that very night, that the young wife of the Cacique, whose heart was lifted up with the thought that her rival was now at last disposed of, tried all her wiles to win back her faithless husband; but in vain. He only

answered her caresses by indifference, then by contempt, then insults, then blows (for with the Indians, woman is always a slave, or rather a beast of burden), and went on to draw such cruel comparisons between her dark skin and the glorious fairness of the Spanish lady, that the wretched girl, beside herself with rage, burst out with her own secret. 'Fool that you are to madden yourself about a stranger who prizes one hair of her Spanish husband's head more than your whole body! Much does your new bride care for you! She is at this moment in her husband's arms!"

"The Cacique screamed furiously to know what she meant; and she, her jealousy and hate of the guiltless lady boiling over once for all, bade him, if he doubted her, go see for himself.

"What use of many words? They were taken. Love, or rather lust, repelled, turned in a moment into devilish hate; and the Cacique, summoning his Indians, bade them bind the wretched Don Sebastian to a tree, and there inflicted on him the lingering death to which he had at first been doomed. For Miranda he had more exquisite cruelty in store. And shall I tell it? Yes, ladies, for the honor of love and of Spain, and for a justification of those cruelties against the Indians which are so falsely imputed to our most Christian nation, it shall be told: he delivered the wretched lady over to the tender mercies of

his wives; and what they were is neither fit for me to tell, nor you to hear.

"The two wretched lovers cast themselves upon each other's necks; drank each other's salt tears with the last kisses; accused themselves as the cause of each other's death; and then rising above fear and grief, broke out into triumph at thus dying for and with each other; and proclaiming themselves the martyrs of love, commended their souls to God, and then stepped joyfully and proudly to their doom."

"And what was that?" asked half-a-dozen trembling voices.

"Don Sebastian, as I have said, was shot to death by arrows; but as for the Lady Miranda, the wretches themselves confessed afterwards, when they received due vengeance for their crimes (as they did receive it), that after all shameful and horrible indignities, she was bound to a tree, and there burned slowly in her husband's sight, stifling her shrieks lest they should wring his heart by one additional pang, and never taking her eyes, to the last, off that beloved face. And so died (but not unavenged) Sebastian de Hurtado and Lucia Miranda,—a Spanish husband and a Spanish wife."

The Don paused, and the ladies were silent a while; for indeed, there was many a gentle tear to be dried; but at last Mrs. St. Leger spoke, half it seemed, to turn off the too painful impression of the

over-true tale, the outlines whereof may still be read in old Charlevoix.

"You have told a sad and noble tale, sir, and told it well; but though your story was to set forth a perfect husband, it has ended rather by setting forth a perfect wife."

"And if I have forgotten, Madam, in praising her to praise him also, have I not done that which would have best pleased his heroical and chivalrous spirit? He, be sure, would have forgotten his own virtue in the light of hers; and he would have wished me, I doubt not, to do the same also. And beside, Madam, where ladies are the theme, who has time or heart to cast one thought upon their slaves?" And the Don made one of his deliberate and highly finished bows.

"Don Guzman is courtier enough, as far as compliments go," said one of the young ladies; "but it was hardly courtier-like of him to find us so sad an entertainment, upon a merry evening."

"Yes," said another; "we must ask him for no more stories."

"Or songs either," said a third. "I fear he knows none but about forsaken maidens and despairing lovers."

"I know nothing at all about forsaken ladies, Madam; because ladies are never forsaken in Spain."

"Nor about lovers despairing there, I suppose?"

"That good opinion of ourselves, Madam, with which you English are pleased to twit us now, and then, always prevents so sad a state of mind. For myself I have had little to do with love; but I have had still less to do with despair, and intend, by help of Heaven, to have less."

"You are valiant, sir."

"You would not have me a coward, Madam?" and so forth.

Now all this time Don Guzman had been talking at Rose Salterne, and giving her the very slightest hint, every now and then, that he was talking at her; till the poor girl's face was almost crimson with pleasure, and she gave herself up to the spell. He loved her still; perhaps he knew that she loved him; he must know some day. She felt now that there was no escape; she was almost glad to think that there was none.

The dark, handsome, stately face; the melodious voice, with its rich Spanish accent; the quiet grace of the gestures; the wild pathos of the story; even the measured and inflated style as of one speaking of another and loftier world; the chivalrous respect and admiration for woman, and for faithfulness to woman—what a man he was! If he had been pleasant heretofore, he was now enchanting. All the ladies round felt that, she could see, as much as she herself did; no, not quite so much, she hoped. She

surely understood him, and felt for his loneliness more than any of them. Had she not been feeling for it through long and sad months? But it was she whom he was thinking of, she whom he was speaking to, all along. Oh, why had the tale ended so soon? She would gladly have sat and wept her eyes out till midnight over one melodious misery after another; but she was quite wise enough to keep her secret to herself; and sat behind the rest, with greedy eyes and demure lips, full of strange and new happiness—or misery; she knew not which to call it.

In the meanwhile, as it was ordained, Cary could see and hear through the window of the hall a good deal of what was going on.

"How that Spanish crocodile ogles the Rose!" whispered he to young St. Leger.

"What wonder? He is not the first by many a one."

"Aye—but—By heaven, she is making side-shots at him with those languishing eyes of hers, the little baggage!"

"What wonder? He is not the first, say I, and won't be the last. Pass the wine, man."

"I have had enough; between sack and singing, my head is as mazed as a dizzy sheep. Let me slip out."

"Not yet, man; remember you are bound for one song more."

So Cary against his will, sat and sang another

song; and in the meanwhile the party had broken up, and wandered away by twos and threes, among trim gardens and pleasaunces, and clipped yew-walks—

> "Where west-winds with musky wing
> About the cedarn alleys fling
> Nard and cassia's balmy smells——"

admiring the beauty of that stately place, long since passed into other hands, and fallen to decay; but then (if old Prince speaks true) one of the noblest mansions of the West.

At last Cary got away and out; sober, but just enough flushed with wine to be ready for any quarrel, and luckily for him, had not gone twenty yards along the great terrace before he met Lady Grenvile.

"Has your ladyship seen Don Guzman?"

"Yes—why, where is he? He was with me not ten minutes ago. You know he is going back to Spain."

"Going! Has his ransom come?"

"Yes, and with it a governorship in the Indies."

"Governorship! Much good may it do the governed."

"Why not, then? He is surely a most gallant gentleman."

"Gallant enough—yes," said Cary carlessly. "I must find him, and congratulate him on his honors."

"I will help you to find him," said Lady Grenvile, whose woman's eye and ear had already suspected something. "Escort me, sir."

"It is but too great an honor to squire the Queen of Bideford," said Cary, offering his hand.

"If I am your queen, sir, I must be obeyed," answered she, in a meaning tone. Cary took the hint, and went on chattering cheerfully enough.

But Don Guzman was not to be found in garden or in pleasaunce.

"Perhaps," at last said a burgher's wife, with a toss of her head, "your Ladyship may meet with him at Hankford's oak."

"At Hankford's oak! what should take him there?"

"Pleasant company, I reckon" (with another toss). "I heard him and Mrs. Salterne talking about the oak just now."

Cary turned pale and drew in his breath.

"Very likely," said Lady Grenvile quietly. "Will you walk with me so far, Mr. Cary?"

"To the world's end, if your Ladyship condescends so far." And off they went, Lady Grenvile wishing that they were going anywhere else, but afraid to let Cary go alone; and suspecting, too, that some one or the other ought to go.

So they went down past the herds of deer, by a trim-kept path into the lonely dell where stood the fatal oak; and, as they went, Lady Grenvile, to

avoid more unpleasant talk, poured into Cary's unheeding ears the story (which he probably had heard fifty times before) how Old Chief-justice Hankford (whom some contradictory myths make the man who committed Prince Henry to prison for striking him on the bench), weary of life and sickened at the horrors and desolations of the Wars of the Roses, went down to his house at Annery there, and bade his keeper shoot any man who, passing through the deer-park at night, should refuse to stand when challenged; and then going down into that glen himself, and hiding himself beneath that oak, met willingly by his keeper's hand the death which his own dared not inflict; but ere the story was half done, Cary grasped Lady Grenvile's hand so tightly that she gave a little shriek of pain.

"There they are!" whispered he, heedless of her; and pointed to that oak, where, half hidden by the tall ferns, stood Rose and the Spaniard.

Her head was on his bosom. She seemed sobbing, trembling; he talking earnestly and passionately; but Lady Grenvile's little shriek made them both look up. To turn and try to escape was to confess all; and the two, collecting themselves instantly, walked towards her, Rose wishing herself fathoms deep beneath the earth.

"Mind, sir," whispered Lady Grenvile as they came up; "you have seen nothing."

"Madam?"

"If you are not on my ground, you are on my brother's. Obey me!"

Cary bit his lip and bowed courteously to the Don.

"I have to congratulate you, I hear, Señor, on your approaching departure."

"I kiss your hands, Señor, in return; but I question whether it be a matter of congratulation, considering all that I leave behind."

"So do I," answered Cary bluntly enough, and the four walked back to the house, Lady Grenvile taking everything for granted with the most charming good humor, and chatting to her three silent companions till they gained the terrace once more. and found four or five of the gentlemen, with Sir Richard at their head, proceeding to the bowling-green.

Lady Grenvile, in an agony of fear about the quarrel which she knew must come, would have gladly whispered five words to her husband; but she dared not do it before the Spaniard, and dreaded, too, a faint or a scream from Rose, whose father was of the party. So she walked on with her fair prisoner, commanding Cary to escort them in, and the Spaniard to go the bowling-green.

Cary obeyed: but he gave her the slip the moment she was inside the door, and then darted off to the gentlemen.

His heart was on fire: all his old passion for Rose had flashed up again at the sight of her with a lover;—and that lover a Spaniard! He would cut his throat for him, if steel could do it! Only that he recollected that Salterne was there, and shrank from exposing Rose; and shrank, too, as every gentleman should, from making a public quarrel in another man's house. Never mind. Where there was a will there was a way. He could get him into a corner, and quarrel with him privately about the cut of his beard, or the color of his ribbon. So in he went; and luckily or unluckily, found standing together apart from the rest, Sir Richard, the Don, and young St. Leger.

"Well, Don Guzman, you have given us wine-bibbers the slip this afternoon. I hope you have been well employed in the meanwhile?"

"Delightfully to myself, Señor," said the Don, who, enraged at being interrupted, if not discovered, was as ready to fight as Cary, but disliked, of course, an explosion as much as he did; "and to others, I doubt not."

"So the ladies say," quoth St. Leger. "He has been making them all cry with one of his stories, and robbing us meanwhile of the pleasure we had hoped for from some of his Spanish songs."

"The devil take Spanish songs!" cried Cary, in a low voice, but loud enough for the Spaniard.

Don Guzman clapped his hand on his sword-hilt instantly.

"Lieutenant Cary," said Richard in a stern voice; "the wine has surely made you forget yourself!"

"As sober as yourself, most worshipful knight; but if you want a Spanish song, here's one; and a very scurvy one it is, like its subject—

"Don Desperado
Walked on the Prado,
And there he met his enemy.
He pulled out a knife, a,
And let out his life, a,
And fled for his own across the sea."

And he bowed low to the Spaniard.

The insult was too gross to require any spluttering.

"Señor Cary, we meet?"

"I thank your quick apprehension. Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto. When, where and with what weapons?"

"For God's sake, gentlemen! Nephew Arthur, Cary is your guest; do you know the meaning of this?"

St. Leger was silent. Cary answered for him.

"An old Irish quarrel, I assure you, sir. A matter of years' standing. In unlacing the Señor's helmet, the evening that he was taken prisoner, I was unlucky enough to twitch his mustachios. You recollect the fact, of course, Señor?"

"Perfectly," said the Spaniard; and then, half-amused and half-pleased, in spite of his bitter wrath, at Cary's quickness and delicacy in shielding Rose, he bowed, and——

"And it gives me much pleasure to find that he whom I trust to have the pleasure of killing to-morrow morning is a gentleman whose nice sense of honor renders him thoroughly worthy of the sword of a De Soto."

Cary bowed in return, while Sir Richard, who saw plainly enough that the excuse was feigned, shrugged his shoulders."

"What weapons, Señor?" asked Will again.

"I should have preferred a horse and pistols," said Don Guzman after a moment, half to himself, and in Spanish; "they make surer work of it than bodkins; but" (with a sigh and one of his smiles) "beggars must not be choosers."

"The best horse in my stable is at your service, Señor," said Sir Richard Grenvile instantly.

"And in mine also, Señor," said Cary; "and I shall be happy to allow you a week to train him, if he does not answer at first to a Spanish hand."

"You forget in your courtesy, gentle sir, that the insult being with me, the time lies with me also. We wipe it off to-morrow morning with simple rapiers and daggers. Who is your second?"

"Mr. Arthur St. Leger here, Señor; who is yours?"

The Spaniard felt himself alone in the world for one moment; and then answered with another of his smiles,——

"Your nation possesses the soul of honor. He who fights an Englishman needs no second."

"And he who fights among Englishmen will always find one," said Sir Richard. "I am the fittest second for my guest."

"You only add one more obligation, illustrious cavalier, to a two-years' prodigality of favors, which I shall never be able to repay."

"But, Nephew Arthur," said Grenvile, "you cannot surely be second against your father's guest, and your own uncle."

"I cannot help it, sir; I am bound by an oath, as Will can tell you. I suppose you won't think it necessary to let me bleed?"

"You half deserve it, sirrah?" said Sir Richard, who was very angry: but the Don interposed quickly.

"Heaven forbid, Señor? We are no French duellists, who are mad enough to make four or six lives answer for the sins of two. This gentleman and I have quarrel enough between us, I suspect, to make a right bloody encounter."

"The dependence is good enough, sir," said Cary, licking his sinful lips at the thought. "Very well. Rapiers and shirts at three to-morrow morning—Is that the bill of fare? Ask Sir Richard where, Atty?

It is against punctilio now for me to speak to him till after I am killed."

"On the sands opposite. The tide will be out at three. And now, gallant gentlemen, let us join the bowlers."

And so they went back and spent a merry evening, all except poor Rose, who, ere she went back, had poured all her sorrows into Lady Grenvile's ear. For the kind woman, knowing that she was motherless and guileless, carried her off into Mrs. St. Leger's chamber, and there entreated her to tell the truth, and heaped her with pity, but with no comfort. For indeed, what comfort was there to give?

. . . . . .

Three o'clock, upon a still, pure, bright Midsummer morning. A broad and yellow sheet of ribbed tide-sands, through which the shallow river wanders from one hill-foot to the other, whispering round dark knolls of rock, and under low tree-fringed cliffs and banks of golden broom. A mile below, the long bridge and the white walled town, all sleeping pearly in the soft haze, beneath a cloudless vault of blue. The white glare of dawn, which last night hung high in the northwest, has traveled now to the northeast, and above the wooded wall of the hills the sky is flushing with rose and amber.

A long line of gulls goes wailing up inland; the rooks from Annery come cawing and sporting round

the corner at Landcross, while high above them four or five herons flap solemnly along to find their breakfast on the shallows. The pheasants and partridges are clucking merrily in the long wet grass; every copse and hedgerow rings with the voice of birds: but the lark, who has been singing since midnight in the "blank height of the dark," suddenly hushes his carol and drops headlong among the corn, as a broad-winged buzzard swings from some wooded peak into the abyss of the valley, and hangs high-poised above the heavenward songster. The air is full of perfume; sweet clover, new-mown hay, the fragrant breath of kine, the dainty scent of sea-weed wreaths and fresh wet sand. Glorious day, glorious place, "bridal of earth and sky," decked well with bridal garlands, bridal perfumes, bridal songs.—What do those four cloaked figures there by the river brink, a dark spot on the fair face of the summer morn?

Yet one is as cheerful as if he too, like all nature round him, were going to a wedding; and that is Will Cary. He has been bathing down below, to cool his brain and steady his hand; and he intends to stop Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto's wooing forever and a day. The Spaniard is in a very different mood; fierce and haggard, he is pacing up and down the sand. He intends to kill Will Cary; but then? Will he be the nearer to Rose by doing so? Can he stay in Bideford? Will she

go with him? Shall he stoop to stain his family by marrying a burgher's daughter?" It is a confused, all but desperate business; and Don Guzman is certain but of one thing, that he is madly in love with this fair witch, and that if she refuse him, then, rather than see her accept another man, he would kill her with his own hands.

Sir Richard Grenvile too is in no very pleasant humor, as St. Leger soon discovers, when the two seconds begin whispering over their arrangements.

"We cannot have either of them killed, Arthur."

"Mr. Cary swears he will kill the Spaniard, sir."

"He shan't. The Spaniard is my guest. I am answerable for him to Leigh, and for his ransom too. And how can Leigh accept the ransom if the man is not given up safe and sound? They won't pay for a dead carcass, boy! The man's life is worth two hundred pounds."

"A very bad bargain, sir, for those who pay the said two hundred for the rascal; but what if he kills Cary?"

"Worse still. Cary must not be killed. I am very angry with him, but he is too good a lad to be lost; and his father would never forgive. We must strike up their swords at the first scratch."

"It will make them very mad, sir."

"Hang them! let them fight us then, if they don't like our counsel. It must be, Arthur."

"Be sure, sir," said Arthur, "that whatsoever you shall command I shall perform. It is only too great an honor to a young man as I am to find myself in the same duel with your worship, and to have the advantage of your wisdom and experience."

Sir Richard smiles, and says—"Now, gentlemen! are you ready?"

The Spaniard pulls out a little crucifix, and kisses it devoutly, smiting on his breast; crosses himself two or three times, and says—"Most willingly, Señor."

Cary kisses no crucifix, but says a prayer nevertheless.

Cloaks and doublets are tossed off, the men placed, the rapiers measured hilt and point; Sir Richard and St. Leger place themselves right and left of the combatants, facing each other, the points of their drawn swords on the sand. Cary and the Spaniard stand for a moment quite upright, their sword-arms stretched straight before them, holding their long rapier horizontally, the left hand clutching the dagger close to their breasts. So they stand eye to eye, with clenched teeth and pale crushed lips, while men might count a score; St. Leger can hear the beating of his own heart; Sir Richard is praying inwardly that no life may be lost. Suddenly there is a quick turn of Cary's wrist and a leap forward. The Spaniard's dagger flashes, and the rapier is turned aside; Cary springs six feet back as the Spaniard

rushes on him in turn. Parry, thrust, parry—the steel rattles, the sparks fly, the men breathe fierce and loud; the devil's game is begun in earnest.

Five minutes have the two had instant death a short six inches off from those wild sinful hearts of theirs, and not a scratch has been given. Yes! the Spaniard's rapier passes under Cary's left arm; he bleeds.

"A hit! a hit! Strike up, Atty!" and the swords are struck up instantly.

Cary, nettled by the smart, tries to close with his foe, but the seconds cross their swords before him.

"It is enough, gentlemen Don Guzman's honor is satisfied!"

"But not my revenge, Señor," said the Spaniard with a frown. "This duel is *a l'outrance*, on my part; and, I believe on Mr. Cary's also."

"By heaven, it is!" says Will, trying to push past. "Let me go, Arthur St. Leger; one of us must down. Let me go, I say!"

"If you stir, Mr. Cary, you have to do with Richard Grenvile!" thunders the lion voice. "I am angry enough with you for having brought on this duel at all. Don't provoke me still further young hot-head!"

Cary stops sulkily.

"You do not know all, Sir Richard, or you would not speak in this way."

"I do, sir, all; and I shall have the honor of talking it over with Don Guzman, myself."

"Hey!" said the Spaniard. "You came here as my second, Sir Richard, as I understood; but not as my counselor."

"Arthur, take your man away! Cary! obey me as you would your father, sir! Can you not trust Richard Grenvile?"

"Come away, for God's sake!" says poor Arthur, dragging Cary's sword from him; "Sir Richard must know best!"

So Cary is led off sulking, and Sir Richard turns to the Spaniard.

"And now, Don Guzman, allow me, though much against my will, to speak to you as a friend to a friend. You will pardon me if I say that I cannot but have seen last night's devotion to——"

"You will be pleased, Señor, not to mention the name of any lady to whom I may have shown devotion. I am not accustomed to have my little affairs talked over by unbidden counselors."

"Well, Señor, if you take offense, you take that which is not given. Only I warn you, with all apologies for any seeming forwardness, that the quest on which you seem to be is one on which you will not be allowed to proceed."

"And who will stop me?" said the Spaniard, with a fierce oath.

"You are not aware, illustrious Señor," said Sir Richard, parrying the question, "that our English laity look upon mixed marriages with full as much dislike as your own ecclesiastics."

"Marriage, sir? Who gave you leave to mention that word to me?"

Sir Richard's brow darkened; the Spaniard, in his insane pride, had forced upon the good knight a suspicion which was not really just.

"Is it possible, then, Señor Don Guzman, that I am to have the shame of mentioning a baser word?"

"Mention what you will, sir. All words are the same to me; for just or unjust, I shall answer them alike only by my sword."

"You will do no such thing, sir. You forget that I am your host.'

"And do you suppose that you have therefore a right to insult me? Stand on your guard, sir!"

Grenvile answered by slapping his own rapier home into the sheath with a quiet smile.

"Señor Don Guzman must be well enough aware of who Richard Grenvile is, to know that he may claim the right of refusing duel to any man, if he shall so think fit."

"Sir!" cried the Spaniard, with an oath, "this is too much! Do you dare to hint that I am unworthy of your sword? Know, insolent English-

man, I am not merely a De Soto,—though that, by St. James, were enough for you or any man. I am a Soto-mayor, a Mendoza, a Bovadilla, a Louada, a——sir! I have blood royal in my veins, and you dare to refuse my challenge?"

"Richard Grenvile can show quarterings, probably, against even Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Soto-mayor de Soto, or against (with no offense to the unquestioned nobility of your pedigree) the bluest blood of Spain. But he can show, moreover, thank God, a reputation which raises him as much above the imputation of cowardice, as it does above that of discourtesy. If you think fit, Señor, to forget what you have just, in very excusable anger, vented, and to return with me, you will find me still, as ever, your most faithful servant and host. If otherwise, you have only to name whither you wish your mails to be sent, and I shall, with unfeigned sorrow, obey your commands concerning them."

The Spaniard bowed stiffly, answered, "To the nearest tavern, Señor," and then strode away. His baggage was sent thither. He took a boat down to Appledore that very afternoon, and vanished, none knew whither. A very courteous note to Lady Grenvile, enclosing the jewel which he had been used to wear round his neck, was the only memorial he left behind him; except, indeed, the scar on Cary's arm, and poor Rose's broken heart.

ALTON LOCKE,

TAILOR AND POET.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

ALTON LOCKE,

TAILOR AND POET.

I AM a Cockney among Cockneys. Italy and the Tropics, the Highlands and Devonshire, I know only in dreams. Even the Surrey Hills, of whose loveliness I have heard so much, are to me a distant fairy-land, whose gleaming ridges I am worthy only to behold afar. With the exception of two journeys, never to be forgotten, my knowledge of England is bounded by the horizon which encircles Richmond Hill.

My earliest recollections are of a suburban street; of its jumble of little shops and little terraces, each exhibiting some fresh variety of capricious ugliness; the little scraps of garden before the doors, with their dusty stunted lilacs and balsam poplars, were my only forests; my only wild animals, the dingy, merry sparrows, who quarreled fearlessly on my window-sill, ignorant of trap or gun. From my earliest childhood, through long nights of sleepless pain, as

the midnight brightened into dawn, and the glaring lamps grew pale, I used to listen, with pleasant awe, to the ceaseless roll of the market-wagons, bringing up to the great city the treasures of the gay green country, the land of fruits and flowers, for which I have yearned all my life in vain. They seemed to my boyish fancy mysterious messengers from another world: the silent, lonely night, in which they were the only moving things, added to the wonder. I used to get out of bed to gaze at them, and envy the coarse men and sluttish women who attended them, their labor among verdant plants and rich brown mould, on breezy slopes, under God's own clear sky. I fancied that they learned what I knew I should have learned there; I knew not then that "the eye only sees that which it brings with it, the power of seeing." When will their eyes be open? When will priests go forth into the highways and the hedges, and preach to the ploughman and the gypsy the blessed news, that there too, in every thicket and fallow-field, is the house of God—there, too, the gate of Heaven?

I do not complain that I am a Cockney. That, too, is God's gift. He made me one, that I might learn to feel for poor wretches who sit stifled in reeking garrets and work-rooms, drinking in disease with every breath—bound in their prison-house of brick and iron, with their own funeral pall hanging over

them, in that canopy of fog and poisonous smoke, from their cradle to their grave. I have drunk of the cup of which they drink. And so I have learned—if, indeed, I have learned—to be a poet—a poet of the people. That honor, surely, was worth buying with asthma, and rickets, and consumption, and weakness, and—worst of all to me—with ugliness. It was God's purpose about me; and, therefore, all circumstances combined to imprison me in London. I used to call it the curse of circumstances that I was a sickly, decrepit Cockney. My mother used to tell me that it was the cross which God had given me to bear. I know now that she was right there. She used to say that my disease was God's will. I do not think, though, that she spoke right there also. I think that it was the will of the world and of the devil, of man's avarice and laziness and ignorance. And so would my readers, perhaps, had they seen the shop in the city where I was born and nursed, with its little garrets reeking with human breath, its kitchens and areas with noisome sewers. A sanitary reformer would not be long in guessing the cause of my unhealthiness. He would not rebuke me—nor would she, sweet soul! now that she is at rest and bliss—for my wild longings to escape, for my envying the very flies and sparrows their wings that I might flee miles away into the country, and breathe the air of heaven once, and die.

My mother was a widow. My father, whom I cannot recollect, was a small retail tradesman in the city. He was unfortunate, and when he died, my mother came down, and lived penuriously enough, I knew not how, till I grew older, down in that same suburban street.

My father had a brother, who had steadily risen in life, in proportion as my father fell. They had both begun life in a grocer's shop. My father saved enough to marry, when of middle age, a woman of his own years, and set up a little shop, where there were far too many already, in the hope—to him, as to the rest of the world, quite just and innocent—of drawing away as much as possible of his neighbor's custom. He failed, died—as so many small tradesmen do—of bad debts and a broken heart, and left us beggars. His brother, more prudent, had, in the meantime, risen to be foreman; then he married, on the strength of his handsome person, his master's blooming widow; and rose and rose, year by year, till, at the time of which I speak, he was owner of a first-rate grocery establishment in the City, and a pleasant villa near Herne Hill, and he had a son, a year or two older than myself, at King's College, preparing for Cambridge and the Church—that being nowadays the approved method of converting a tradesman's son into a gentleman—whereof let artisans, and gentlemen also, take note.

My uncle one day came down to visit us, resplendent in a black velvet waistcoat, thick gold chain, and acres of shirt-front; and I and Susan were turned to feed on our own curiosity and awe in the back-yard, while he and my mother were closeted together for an hour or so in the living-room. When he was gone, my mother called me in, and with eyes which would have been tearful had she allowed herself such a weakness before us, told me very solemnly and slowly, as if to impress upon me the awfulness of the matter, that I was to be sent to a tailor's workrooms the next day.

And an awful step it was in her eyes, as she laid her hands on my head and murmured to herself, "Behold, I send you forth as a lamb in the midst of wolves. Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." And then, rising hastily to conceal her own emotion, fled up-stairs, where we could hear her throw herself on her knees by the bedside, and sob piteously.

. . . . . .

With a beating heart I shambled along by my mother's side next day to Mr. Smith's shop, in a street off Piccadilly; and stood by her side, just within the door, waiting till some one would condescend to speak to us, and wondering when the time would come when I, like the gentleman who skipped up and down the shop, should shine glorious in pat-

ent-leather boots, and a blue satin tie sprigged with gold.

Two personages, both equally magnificent, stood talking with their backs to us; and my mother, in doubt, like myself, as to which of them was the tailor, at last summoned up courage to address the wrong one, by asking if he were Mr. Smith.

The person addressed answered by a most polite smile and bow, and assured her that he had not that honor; while the other he-he'ed, evidently a little flattered by the mistake, and then uttered in a tremendous voice these words:

"I have nothing for you, my good woman—go. Mr. Elliot! how did you come to allow these people to get into the establishment?"

"My name is Locke, sir, and I was to bring my son here this morning."

"Oh—ah!—Mr. Elliot see to these persons. As I was saying, my lard, the crimson velvet suit, about thirty-five guineas. By-the-by, that coat ours? I thought so—idea grand and light—masses well broken—very fine chiaroscuro about the whole—an artistic wrinkle just above the hips—which I flatter myself no one but myself and my friend Mr. Cook really do understand. The vapid smoothness of the door dummy, my lard, should be confined to the regions of the Strand. Mr. Elliot, where are you? Just be so good as to show his lardship that

lovely new thing in drab and *blue-foncé*. Ah! your lardship can't wait.—Now, my good woman, is this the young man?"

"Yes," said my mother: "and—and—God deal so with you, sir, as you deal with the widow and the orphan."

"Oh—ah—that will depend very much, I should say, on how the widow and the orphan deal with me. Mr. Elliot, take this person into the office and transact the little formalities with her. Jones, take the young man upstairs to the work-room."

I stumbled after Mr. Jones up a dark, narrow, iron staircase till we emerged through a trap-door to the garret at the top of the house. I recoiled with disgust at the scene before me; and here I was to work—perhaps through life! A low lean-to room, stifling me with the combined odors of human breath and perspiration, stale beer, the sweet sickly smell of gin, and the sour and hardly less disgusting one of new cloth. On the floor, thick with dust and dirt, scraps of stuff and ends of thread, sat some dozen haggard, untidy, shoeless men, with a mingled look of care and recklessness that made me shudder. The windows were tight closed to keep out the cold winter air; and the condensed breath ran in streams down the panes, checkering the dreary out-look of chimney-tops and smoke. The conductor handed me over to one of the men.

"Here, Crossthwaite, take this younker and make a tailor of him. Keep him next you, and prick him up with your needle if he shirks."

He disappeared down the trap-door, and mechanically, as if in a dream, I sat down by the man and listened to his instructions, kindly enough bestowed. But I did not remain in peace two minutes. A burst of chatter rose as the foreman vanished, and a tall, bloated, sharp-nosed young man next me bawled in my ear,—

"I say, young 'un, fork out the tin and pay your footing at Conscrumption Hospital."

"What do you mean?"

"Ain't he just green?—Down with the stumpy —a tizzy for a pot of half-and-half."

"I never drink beer."

"Then never do," whispered the man at my side; "as sure as hell's hell, it's your only chance."

There was a fierce, deep earnestness in the tone which made me look at the speaker, but the other instantly chimed in—

"Oh, yer don't, don't yer, my young Father Mathy? then you'll soon learn it here if yer want to keep yer victuals down."

"And I have promised to take my wages home to my mother."

"Oh, criminy! hark to that, my coves! here's a

chap as is going to take the blunt home to his mammy."

"T'aint much of it the old'un 'll see," said another. "Ven yer pockets it at the Cock and Bottle, my kiddy, yer won't find much of it left o' Sunday mornings."

"Don't his mother know he's out?" asked another, "and won't she know it—

> Ven he's sitting in his glory
> Half-price at the Victory.

Oh! no, ve never mentions her—her name is never heard. Certainly not, by no means. Why should it?"

"Well, if yer won't stand a pot," quoth the tall man, "I will, that's all, and blow temperance. 'A short life and a merry one,' says the tailor—

> The ministers talk a great deal about port,
> And they makes Cape wine very dear,
> But blow their hi's if ever they tries
> To deprive a poor cove of his beer.

Here, Sam, run to the Cock and Bottle for a pot of half-and-half to my score."

A thin pale lad jumped up and vanished, while my tormentor turned to me:

"I say, young'un, do you know why we're nearer heaven here than our neighbors?"

"I shouldn't have thought so," answered I with a

naïveté which raised a laugh, and dashed the tall man for a moment.

"Yer don't? then I'll tell yer. A cause we're top of the house in the first place, and next place yer'll die here six months sooner nor if yer worked in the room below. Ain't that logic and science, Orator?" appealing to Crossthwaite.

"Why?" asked I.

"A cause you get all the other floors' stinks up here as well as your own. Concentrated essence of man's flesh is this here as you're a breathing. Cellar workroom we calls Rheumatic Ward, because of the damp. Ground-floor's Fever Ward—them as don't get typhus gets dysentery, and them as don't get dysentery gets typhus—your nose'd tell yer why if you opened the back windy. First floor's Asthmy Ward—don't you hear 'um now through the cracks in the boards, a puffing away like a nest of young locomotives? And this here most august and upper-crust cockloft is the Conscrumptive Hospital. First you begins to cough, then you proceeds to expectorate—spittoons, as you see, perwided free gracious for nothing—fined a kivarter if you spits on the floor—

Then your cheeks they grows red, and your nose it grows thin,
And your bones they stick out, till they come through your skin:

and then, when you've sufficiently covered the poor dear shivering bare backs of the hairistocracy—

Die, die, die,
Away you fly,
Your soul is in the sky

as the hinspired Shakespeare wittily remarks."

And the ribald lay down on his back, stretched himself out, and pretended to die in a fit of coughing, which last was, alas! no counterfeit, while poor I, shocked and bewildered, let my tears fall fast upon my knees.

"Fine him a pot!" roared one, "for talking about kicking the bucket. He's a nice young man to keep a cove's spirits up, and talk about 'a short life and a merry one.' Here comes the heavy. Hand it here to take the taste of that fellow's talk out of my mouth."

"Well, my young'un," recommenced my tormentor, "and how do you like your company?"

"Leave the boy alone," growled Crossthwaite; "don't you see he's crying?"

"Is that anything good to eat? Give me some on it if it is—it'll save me washing my face." And he took hold of my hair and pulled my head back.

"I'll tell you what, Jemmy Downes," said Crossthwaite, in a voice which made him draw back, "if you don't drop that, I'll give you such a taste of my tongue as shall turn you blue."

"You'd better try it on then. Do—only just now —if you please."

"Be quiet, you fool!" said another. "You're a pretty fellow to chaff the orator. He'll slang you up the chimney afore you can get your shoes on."

"Fine him a kivarter for quarreling," cried another, and the bully subsided into a minute's silence, after a *sotto voce*—"Blow temperance, and blow all Chartists, say I!" and then delivered himself of his feelings in a doggerel song:

"Some folks leads coves a dance,
With their pledge of temperance,
And their plans for donkey sociation;
And their pockets full they crams
With their patriotic flams,
And then swears 'tis for the good of the nation.

But I don't care two inions
For political opinions,
While I can stand my heavy and my quartern;
For to drown dull care within,
In baccy, beer and gin,
Is the prime of a working-tailor's fortin!

There's common sense for yer now; hand the pot here."

I recollect nothing more of that day, except that I bent myself to my work with assiduity enough to earn praises from Crossthwaite. It was to be done,

and I did it. The only virtue I ever possessed (if virtue it be) is the power of absorbing my whole heart and mind in the pursuit of the moment, however dull or trivial, if there be good reason why it should be pursued at all.

I owe, too, an apology to my readers for introducing all this ribaldry. God knows, it is as little to my taste as it can be to theirs, but the thing exists; and those who live, if not by, yet still beside such a state of things ought to know what the men are like to whose labor, aye, life-blood, they owe their luxuries. They are "their brother's keepers," let them deny it as they will. Thank God, many are finding that out; and the morals of the working tailors, as well as of other classes of artisans, are rapidly improving: a change which has been brought about partly by the wisdom and kindness of a few master tailors, who have built workshops fit for human beings, and have resolutely stood out against the iniquitous and destructive alterations in the system of employment.

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My great desire now was to get knowledge. By getting that I fancied, as most self-educated men are apt to do, I should surely get wisdom. Books, I thought, would tell me all I needed. But where to get the books? And which? I had exhausted our small stock at home; I was sick and tired, without knowing why, of their narrow conventional view of

everything. After all, I had been reading them all along, not for their doctrines but for their facts, and knew not where to find more, except in forbidden paths. I dare not ask my mother for books, for I dare not confess to her that religious ones were just what I did not want; and all history, poetry, science, I had been accustomed to hear spoken of as "carnal learning, human philosophy," more or less diabolic and ruinous to the soul. So, as usually happens in this life—"By the law was the knowledge of sin"—and unnatural restrictions on the development of the human spirit only associated with guilt of conscience what ought to have been an innocent and necessary blessing.

In a street through which I used to walk homeward was an old book shop, piled and fringed outside and in with books of every age, size, and color. And here I at last summoned courage to stop, and timidly and stealthily taking out some volume whose title attracted me, snatch hastily a few pages and hasten on, half fearful of being called on to purchase, half ashamed of a desire which I fancied every one else considered as unlawful as my mother did. Sometimes I was lucky enough to find the same volume several days running, and to take up the subject where I had left it off; and thus I contrived to hurry through a great deal of "Childe Harold," "Lara," and the "Corsair"—a new world of wonders to me.

They fed, those poems, both my health and my diseases; while they gave me, little of them as I could understand, a thousand new notions about scenery, and man, a sense of poetic melody and luxuriance as yet utterly unknown. They chimed in with all my discontent, my melancholy, my thirst after any life of action and excitement, however frivolous, insane or even worse. I forgot the Corsair's sinful trade in his free and daring life; rather, I honestly eliminated the bad element—in which, God knows, I took no delight—and kept the good one. However, that might be, the innocent—guilty pleasure grew on me day by day. Innocent, because human—guilty, because disobedient.

One evening, however, I fell accidentally on a new book—"The Life and Poems of J. Bethune." I opened the story of his life—became interested, absorbed—and there I stood, I know not how long, on the greasy pavement, heedless of the passers who thrust me right and left, reading by the flaring gaslight that sad history of labor, sorrow, and death.—How the Highland cotter, in spite of disease, penury, starvation itself, and the daily struggle to earn his bread by digging and ditching, educated himself—how he toiled unceasingly with his hands—how he wrote his poems in secret on dirty scraps of paper and old leaves of books—how thus he wore himself out, manful and godly, "bating not a jot of heart or hope,"

till the weak flesh would bear no more; and the noble spirit, unrecognized by the lord of the soil, returned to God who gave it. I seemed to see in his history a sad presage of my own. If he, stronger, more self-restrained, more righteous far than ever I could be, had died thus unknown, unassisted, in the stern battle with social disadvantages, what must be my lot?

And tears of sympathy, rather than of selfish fear, fell fast upon the book.

A harsh voice from the inner darkness of the shop startled me.

"Hoot, laddie, ye'll better no spoil my books wi' greeting over them."

I replaced the book hastily, and was hurrying on, but the same voice called me back in a more kindly tone.

"Stop a wee, my laddie. I'm no angered wi' ye. Come in, and we'll just ha' a bit crack thegither."

I went in, for there was a geniality in the tone to which I was unaccustomed, and something whispered to me the hope of an adventure, as indeed it proved to be, if an event deserves that name which decided the course of my whole destiny.

"What war ye greeting about, then? What was the book?"

"'Bethune's Life and Poems,' sir," I said. "And certainly they did affect me very much."

"Affect ye? Ah, Johnnie Bethune, puir fellow! Ye maunna take on about sic like laddies, or ye'll greet your e'en out o' your head. It's mony a braw man beside Johnnie Bethune has gane Johnnie Bethune's gate."

Though unaccustomed to the Scotch accent, I could make out enough of this speech to be in nowise consoled by it. But the old man turned the conversation by asking me abruptly my name, and trade, and family.

"Hum, hum, widow, eh? puir body! work at Smith's shop, eh? Ye'll ken John Crossthwaite, then? aye? hum, hum; an' ye're desirous o' reading books? vara weel."

"Vara weel; then books I'll lend ye, after I've had a crack wi' Crossthwaite aboot ye, gin I find his opinion o' ye satisfactory. Come to me the day after to-morrow. An' mind, here are my rules;—a' damage done to a book to be paid for, or na mair books lent; ye'll mind to tak no books without leave; specially ye'll mind no to read in bed o' nights, —industrious folks ought to be sleeping' betimes, an I'd no be a party to burning puir weans in their beds; and lastly, ye'll observe not to read mair than five books at once."

I assured him that I thought such a thing impossible; but he smiled in his saturnine way, and said—

"We'll see this day fortnight. Now, then, I've

observed ye for a month past over that aristocratic Byron's poems. And I'm willing to teach the young idea how to shoot—but no to shoot itself; so ye'll just leave alane that vinegary, soul-destroying trash, and I'll lend ye, gin I hear a gude report of ye, 'The Paradise Lost,' o' John Milton—a gran' classic model; and for the doctrine o't, it's just aboot as gude as ye'll hear elsewhere the noo. So gang your gate, and tell John Crossthwaite, privately auld Sandy Mackaye wad like to see him the morn's night."

I went home in wonder and delight. Books! books! books! I should have my fill of them at last. And when I said my prayers at night, I thanked God for this unexpected boon; and then remembered that my mother had forbidden it. That thought checked the thanks, but not the pleasure. Oh, parents! are there not real sins enough in the world already, without your defiling it, over and above, by inventing new ones?

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I passed whole days on the workroom floor in brooding silence—my mind peopled with an incoherent rabble of phantasms patched up from every object of which I had ever read. I could not control my day-dreams; they swept me away with them over sea and land, and into the bowels of the earth.

My soul escaped on every side from my civilized dungeon of brick and mortar, into the great free world from which my body was debarred.

And now I began to crave for some means of expressing these fancies to myself. While they were mere thoughts, parts of me, they were unsatisfactory, however delicious. I longed to put them outside me, that I might look at them and talk to them as permanent independent things. First I tried to sketch them on the whitewashed walls of my garret, on scraps of paper begged from Mackaye, or picked up in the workroom. But from my ignorance of any rules of drawing, they were utterly devoid of beauty, and only excited my disgust. Besides, I had thoughts as well as objects to express—thoughts strange, sad, wild, about my own feelings, my own destiny, and drawing could not speak them for me.

Then I turned instinctively to poetry: with its rules I was getting rapidly conversant. The mere desire of imitation urged me on, and when I tried, the grace of rhyme and metre covered a thousand defects. I tell my story, not as I saw it then, but as I see it now. . . . . .

But to escape from my own thoughts, I could not help writing something; and to escape from my own private sorrows, writing on some matter with which I had no personal concern. And so, after much casting about for subjects, Childe Harold and the old

missionary records contrived to celebrate a spiritual wedding in my brain, of which anomalous marriage came a proportionately anomalous offspring.

My hero was not to be a pirate, but a pious sea-rover, who with a crew of saints, or at least uncommonly fine fellows, who could be very manly and jolly, and yet all be good Christians, of a somewhat vague and latitudinarian cast of doctrine (for my own was becoming rapidly so), set forth under the red-cross flag to colonize and convert one of my old paradises, a South Sea Island.

I forget most of the lines—they were probably great trash, but I hugged them to my bosom as a young mother does her first child.

'Twas sunset in the lone Pacific world,
The rich gleams fading in the western sky;
Within the still Lagoon the sails were furled,
The red-cross flag alone was flaunting high.
Before them was the low and palm-fringed shore,
Behind, the outer ocean's baffled roar.

After which valiant plunge *in medias res*, came a great lump of deception, after the manner of youths—of the island, and the white-houses, and the banana groves, and above all, the single volcano towering over the whole, which

Shaking a sinful isle with thundering shocks,
Reproved the worshipers of stones and stocks.

Then how a line of foam appears on the Lagoon, which is supposed at first to be a shoal of fish, but turns out to be a troop of naked island beauties swimming out to the ship.

The crew gaze in pardonable admiration, but the hero, in a long speech, reproves them for their light-mindedness, reminds them of their sacred mission, and informs them that,

> The soldiers of the cross should turn their eyes
> From carnal lusts and heathen vanities;

beyond which indisputable assertion I never got, for this being about the fiftieth stanza, I stopped to take breath a little; and reading and re-reading, patching and touching continually, grew so accustomed to my bantling's face, that, like a mother, I could not tell whether it was handsome or hideous, sense or nonsense. I have since found out that the true plan, for myself at least, is to write off as much as possible at a time, and then lay it by and forget it for weeks—if I can, for months. After that, on returning to it, the mind regards it as something altogether strange and new, and can, or rather ought to, judge of it as it would of the work of another pen.

But really, between conceit and disgust, fancying myself one day a great new poet, and the next a mere twaddler, I got so puzzled and anxious, that I

determined to pluck up courage, go to Mackaye, and ask him to solve the problem for me.

"Hech, sirs, poetry! I've been expecting it. I suppose it's the appointed gate o' a workman's intellectual life—that same lust o' versification. Aweel, aweel,—let's hear."

Blushing and trembling, I read my verses aloud in as resonant and magniloquent a voice as I could command. I thought Mackaye's upper lip would never stop lengthening, or his lower lip protruding. He chuckled intensely at the unfortunate rhyme between "shocks" and "stocks." Indeed, it kept him in cnuckling matter for a whole month afterwards; but when I got to the shoal of naked girls, he could bear no more, and burst out—

"What the deevil! is there no harlotry and idolatry here in England, that ye maun gang speering after it in the Cannibal Islands? Are ye gaun to be like they puir aristocrat bodies, that wad suner hear an Italian dog howl, than an English nightingale sing, and winna hearken to Mr. John Thomas till he calls himself Giovanni Thomasino; or do ye tak yourself for a singing bird, to go all your days tweedle-dumdeeing out into the lift, just for the lust o' hearing your ain clan clatter? Will ye be a man or a lintie? Coral Islands? Pacific? What do ye ken about Pacifics? Are ye a Cockney or a Cannibal Islander? Dinna stand there, ye gowk, as

fusionless as a docken, but tell me that! Whaur do ye live?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Mackaye!" asked I, with a doleful and disappointed visage.

"Mean—why, if God had meant ye to write about Pacifics, He'd ha' put ye there—and because He means ye to write about London town, He's put ye there—and gien ye an unco sharp taste o' the ways o't; and, I'll gie ye anither. Come along wi' me."

And he seized me by the arm, and hardly giving me time to put on my hat, marched me out into the streets, and away through Clare Market to St. Giles's.

It was a foul, chilly, foggy Saturday night. From the butchers' and greengrocers' shops the gas lights flared and flickered, wild and ghastly, over haggard groups of slip-shod dirty women, bargaining for scraps of stale meat and frost-bitten vegetables, wrangling about short weight and bad quality. Fish-stalls and fruit-stalls lined the edge of the greasy pavement, sending up odors as foul as the language of sellers and buyers. Blood and sewer-water crawled from under doors and out of spouts, and reeked down the gutters among offal, animal and vegetable, in every stage of putrefaction. Foul vapors rose from cowsheds and slaughter-houses, and the doorways of undrained alleys, where the inhabitants carried the filth out on their shoes from the back yard into the court, and from the court up

into the main street; while above, hanging like cliffs over the streets—those narrow brawling torrents of filth, and poverty, and sin,—the houses with their teeming load of life were piled up into the dingy, choking night. A ghastly, deafening, sickening sight it was. Go, scented Belgravian! and see what London is! and then go to the library which God has given thee—one often fears in vain—and see what science says this London might be!

"Aye," he muttered to himself, as he strode along, "sing awa! get yourself wi' child wi' pretty fancies and gran' words, like the rest o' the poets, and gang to hell for it."

"To hell, Mr. Mackaye?"

"Aye, to a verra real hell, Alton Locke, laddie—a warse ane than ony fiends' kitchen, or subterranean Smithfield that ye'll hear o' in the pulpits—the hell on earth o' being a flunkey, and a humbug, and a useless peacock, wasting God's gifts on your ain lusts and pleasures—and kenning it—and not being able to get out o' it, for the chains o' vanity, and self-indulgence. I've warned ye. Now look there——"

He stopped suddenly before the entrance of a miserable alley—

"Look! there's not a soul down that yard but's either beggar, drunkard, thief, or warse. Write anent that! Say how you saw the mouth o' hell, and the twa pillars thereof at the entry—the pawnbroker's

shop o' one side, and the gin palace at the other—twa monstrous deevils, eating up men, and women, and bairns, body and soul. Look at the jaws o' the monsters, how they open, and open, and swallow in anither victim and anither. Write anent that."

"What jaws, Mr. Mackaye?"

"The faulding-doors o' the gin shop, goose. Are na they a mair damnable man-devouring idol than ony red-hot statue o' Moloch, or wicker Gogmagog, wherein thae auld Britons burnt their prisoners? Look at thae barefooted barebacked hizzies, with their arms roun' the men's necks, and their mouths full o' vitriol and beastly words? Look at that Irishwoman pouring the gin down the babbie's throat! Look at that rough o' a boy gaun out o' the pawn shop, where he's been pledging the handkerchief he stole the morning, into the gin shop, to buy beer poisoned wi' grains o' paradise, and cocculus indicus, and saut, and a' damnable, maddening, thirst-breeding, lust-breeding drugs? Look at that girl that went in wi' a shawl on her back and cam' out wi'out ane! Drunkards frae the breast!—harlots frae the cradle! damned before they're born! John Calvin had an inkling o' the truth there, I'm a'most driven to think, wi' his reprobation deevil's doctrines!"

"Well—but—Mr. Mackaye, I know nothing about these poor creatures."

"Then ye ought. What do ye ken anent the Pacific? Which is maist to your business?—thae bare-backed hizzies that play the harlot o' the other side o' the warld, or these—these thousands o' bare-backed hizzies that play the harlot o' your ain side—made out o' your ain flesh and blude? You a poet! True poetry, like true charity, my laddie, begins at hame. If ye'll be a poet at a' ye maun be a cockney poet; and while the cockneys be what they be, ye maun write like Jeremiah of old, o' lamentation and mourning and woe, for the sins o' your people. Gin you want to learn the spirit o' a people's poet, down wi' your Bible and read thae auld Hebrew prophets, gin ye wad learn the style, read your Burns frae morning till night; and gin ye'd learn the matter, just gang after your nose, and keep your eyes open, and ye'll no miss it."

"But all this is so—so unpoetical."

"Hech! Is there no the heeven above them there? and the hell beneath them? and God frowning, and the deevil grinning? No poetry there! Is no the verra idea of the classic tragedy defined to be, man conquered by circumstance? Canna ye see it there? And the verra idea of the modern tragedy, man conquering by circumstance?—and I ll show you that, too—in mony a garret where no eye but the gude God's enters, to see the patience, and the fortitude, and the self-sacrifice, love stronger than

death, that's shining in the dark places o' the earth. Come wi' me, and see."

We went on through a back street or two, and then into a huge, miserable house, which, a hundred years ago, perhaps, had witnessed the luxury, and rung to the laughter of some one great fashionable family, alone there in their glory. Now every room of it held its family, or its group of families—a phalanstery of all the fiends;—its grand staircase, with the carved balustrade rotting and crumbling away piecemeal, converted into a common sewer for all its inmates. Up stair after stair we went, while wails of children, and curses of men, steamed out upon the hot stifling rush of air from every doorway, till, at the topmost story, we knocked at a garret door. We entered. Bare it was of furniture, comfortless, and freezing cold; but, with the exception of the plaster dropping from the roof, and the broken windows, patched with rags and paper, there was scrupulous neatness about the whole, which contrasted strangely with the filth and slovenliness outside. There was no bed in the room—no table. On a broken chair by the chimney sat a miserable old woman, fancying that she was warming her hands over embers which had long been cold, shaking her head and muttering to herself, with palsied lips, about the guardians and the workhouse; while upon a few rags on the floor lay a girl, ugly, small-pox marked, hollow eyed,

emaciated, her only bed clothes the skirt of a large handsome new riding-habit, at which two other girls, wan and tawdry, were stitching busily, as they sat right and left of her on the floor. The old woman took no notice of us as we entered; but one of the girls looked up, and, with a pleased gesture of recognition, put her finger up to her lips, and whispered, "Ellen's asleep."

"I'm not asleep, dears," answered a faint, unearthly voice; "I was only praying. Is that Mr. Mackaye?"

"Aye, my lassies; but ha' ye gotten na fire the nicht?

"No," said one of them, bitterly, "we've earned no fire to-night, by fair trade or foul either."

The sick girl tried to raise herself up and speak, but was stopped by a frightful fit of coughing and expectoration, as painful apparently, to the sufferer as it was, I confess, disgusting even to me.

I saw Mackaye slip something into the hand of one of the girls, and whisper, "A half-hundred of coals;" to which she replied, with an eager look of gratitude that I never can forget and hurried out. Then the sufferer, as if taking advantage of her absence, began to speak quickly and eagerly.

"Oh, Mr. Mackaye—dear, kind Mr. Mackaye—do speak to her; and do speak to poor Lizzy here! I'm not afraid to say it before her, because she's more gentle like, and hasn't learnt to say bad words yet—but do speak to them, and tell them not to go the bad

like all the rest. Tell them it'll never prosper. I know it is want that drives them to it, as it drives all of us—but tell them it's best to starve and die honest girls, than to go about with the shame and the curse of God on their hearts, for the sake of keeping this poor, miserable, vile body together for a few short years more in this world o' sorrow. Do tell them, Mr. Mackaye."

"I'm thinking," said he, with the tears running down his old withered face, "ye'll make a better preacher at that text than I shall, Ellen."

"Oh, no, no; who am I, to speak to them?—it's no merit o' mine, Mr. Mackaye, that the Lord's kept me pure through it all. I should have been just as bad as any of them, if the Lord had not kept me out of temptation in His great mercy, by making me the poor ill-favoured creature I am. From that time I was burnt when I was a child, and had the small-pox afterwards, oh! how sinful I was, and repined and rebelled against the Lord! And now I see it was all His blessed mercy to keep me out of evil, pure and unspotted for my dear Jesus, when He comes to take me to Himself. I saw Him last night, Mr. Mackaye, as plain as I see you now, all in a flame of beautiful white fire, smiling at me so sweetly; and He showed me the wounds in His hands and His feet, and He said, 'Ellen, my own child, those that suffer with me here, they shall be glorified with me

hereafter, for I'm coming very soon to take you home.'"

Sandy shook his head at all this with a strange expression of his face, as if he sympathized and yet disagreed, respected and yet smiled at the shape which her religious ideas had assumed; and I remarked in the meantime that the poor girl's neck and arm were all scarred and distorted, apparently from the effects of a burn.

"Ah," said Sandy, at length, "I tauld ye ye were the better preacher of the two; ye've mair comfort to gie Sandy than he has to gie the like o' ye. But how is the wound in your back the day?"

Oh, it was wonderfully better! the doctor had come and given her such blessed ease with a great thick leather he had put under it, and then she did not feel the boards through so much. "But oh, Mr. Mackaye, I'm so afraid it will make me live longer to keep me away from my dear Saviour. And there's one thing, too, that's breaking my heart, and makes me long to die this very minute, even if I didn't go to Heaven at all, Mr. Mackaye." (And she burst out crying, and between her sobs it came out, as well as I could gather, that her notion was, that her illness was the cause of keeping the girls in "*the bad way*," as she called it.) "For Lizzy here, I did hope that she had repented of it after all my talking to her; but since I've been so bad, and the girls have had to

keep me most o' the time, she's gone out of night just as bad as ever."

Lizzie had hid her face in her hands the greater part of this speech. Now she looked up passionately, almost fiercely—

"Repent—I have repented—I repent of it every hour—I hate myself, and hate all the world because of it; but I must—I must; I cannot see her starve, and I cannot starve myself. When she first fell sick she kept on as long as she could, doing what she could, and then between us we only earned three shillings a week, and there was ever so much to take off for fire, and two pence for thread, and five pence for candles; and then we were always getting fined, because they never gave us out the work till too late on purpose, and then they lowered prices again; and now Ellen can't work at all, and there's four of us with the old lady, to keep off two's work that couldn't keep themselves alone."

"Doesn't the parish allow the old lady anything?" I ventured to ask.

"They used to allow half-a crown for a bit; and the doctor ordered Ellen things from the parish, but it isn't half of 'em she ever got; and when the meat came, it was half times not fit to eat, and when it was her stomach turned against it. If she was a lady she'd be cockered up with all sorts of soups and jellies, and nice things, just the minute she fancied 'em, and

lie on a water bed instead of the bare floor—and so she ought; but where's the parish 'll do that? And the hospital wouldn't take her in because she was incurable; and, besides, the old 'un wouldn't let her go—nor into the union neither. When she's in a good-humor like, she'll sit by her by the hour, holding her hand and kissing of it, and nursing of it, for all the world like a doll. But she won't hear of the workhouse; so now, the last three weeks, they takes off all her pay, because they say she must go into the house, and not kill her daughter by keeping her out—as if they warn't a killing her themselves."

"No workhouse—no workhouse!" said the old woman, turning round suddenly, in a clear, lofty voice. "No workhouse, sir, for an officer's daughter!"

And she relapsed into her stupor.

At that moment the other girl entered with the coals—but without staying to light the fire, ran up to Ellen with some trumpery dainty she had bought and tried to persuade her to eat it.

"We have been telling Mr. Mackaye everything," said poor Lizzy.

"A pleasant story, isn't it? Oh! if that fine lady, as we're making that riding-habit for, would just spare only half the money that goes to dressing her up to ride in the park, to send us out to the colonies, wouldn't I be an honest girl there?—maybe an honest man's wife! Oh, my God, wouldn't I slave my fingers

to the bone to work for him! Wouldn't I mend my life then! I couldn't help it—it would be like getting into heaven out of hell. But now—we must—we must, I tell you. I shall go mad soon, I think, or take to drink. When I passed the gin-shop down there just now, I had to run like mad for fear I should go in; and if I once took to that——Now then, to work again. Make up the fire Mrs. . . . . ., please do."

And she sat down, and began stitching frantically at the riding-habit, from which the other girl had hardly lifted her hands or her eyes for a moment during our visit.

We made a motion as if to go.

"God bless you," said Ellen; "come again soon, dear Mr. Mackaye."

"Good-bye," said the elder girl; "and good night to you. Night and day's all the same here—we must leave this home by seven o'clock to-morrow morning. My lady's going to ride early, they say, whoever she may be, and we must just sit up all night. It's often we haven't had our clothes off for a week together, from four in the morning till two the next morning sometimes—stitch, stitch, stitch. Somebody's wrote a song about that—I'll learn to sing it—it'll sound fitting-like up here."

"Better sing hymns," said Ellen.

"Hymns for . . . . . ?" answered the

other, and then burst out in that peculiar, wild, ringing, fiendish laugh—has my reader never heard it?

I pulled out the two or three shillings which I possessed, and tried to make the girls take them, for the sake of poor Ellen.

"No; you're a working man, and we won't feed on you—you'll want it some day—all the trade's going the same way as we, as fast as ever it can!"

Sandy and I went down the stairs.

"Poetic element? Yon lassie, rejoicing in her disfigurement and not her beauty—like the nuns of Peterborough in auld time—is there na poetry there? That puir lassie, dying on the bare boards, and seeing her Saviour in her dreams, is there na poetry there, callant? That auld body owre the fire, wi' her 'an officer's dochter,' is there na poetry there? That ither, prostituting hersel to buy food for her freen—is there na poetry there?—tragedy—

> With hues as when some mighty painter dips
> His pen in dyes of earthquake and eclipse.

Ay, Shelly's gran'; always gran'; but Fact is grander—God and Satan are grander. All around ye, in every gin-shop and costermonger's cellar, are God and Satan at death's grips; every garret is a haill Paradise Lost or Paradise Regained; and will ye think it beneath ye to be the 'People's Poet?"

. . . . . .

I.

"'Weep, weep, weep, and weep
For pauper, dolt, and slave;
Hark! from wasted moor and fen,
Feverous alley, workhouse den,
Swells the wail of Englishmen:
"Work! or the grave."

II.

"'Down, down, down and down
With idler, knave, and tyrant;
Why for sluggards stint and moil
He that will not live by toil
Has no right on English soil;
God's word's our warrant!

III.

"'Up, up, up, and up,
Face your game, and play it!
The night is past—behold the sun!—
The cup is full, the web is spun,
The Judge is set, the doom begun;
Who shall stay it?'"

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